



# Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk May 8, 2016

North & West edition No 711

## ELECTION

### Tories win crime commissioner vote

All the results from across the county

## CRIME

### Dog smuggling on the rise

Special report amid renewed rabies fear

## SPORT

### Gills' final bid for glory

Can Gillingham beat Millwall and clinch League 1 play-off place?

## EUROPE

### Could Brexit end live exports?

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## Support your local club and buy in to the dream

OVER recent decades, a number of Kent football clubs have seen owners emerge promising deep pockets and the delivery of footballing glory.

Almost without exception, they come up against the age-old problem that football is a funny old game and however quickly you throw money at a club, the quicker it disappears down the drain of broken dreams and damaged egos.

Yet it is the promise of glory, the promise of putting your team on the map which continues to attract people to a sport where expecting a financial return in all but a handful of cases is truly the impossible dream.

And it is that dream of a better tomorrow which puts a spring into the step of every football fan, regardless of the size of your club.

While everyone at KoS wishes Gillingham the very best of luck in their final bid to keep their



Editor **Chris Britcher**

promotion hopes alive, our affections spread far and wide. Because while Football League teams are short on the ground in the county, we are blessed with a number of strong non-league teams.

It is often that far down the footballing pyramid where the real pride kicks in. Where the players actually live in the towns they represent, who hold down jobs locally.

Whether its Ashford, Whitstable, Margate, Tonbridge, Folkestone Ebbsfleet, Dover or any of the other teams which ply their trade here,

you can buy into the dream with every match. And do so with a ticket price which doesn't make your eyes water.

Leicester City's incredible title feat should not only inspire those struggling to survive in the top flight, but those all the way down to the grassroots level of the game.

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Published in Kent and printed by Archant Print, division of Archant Community Media Limited (Co Reg No 19300). Registered Office: Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE

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## Lib Dem corpse twitches as Tories stay powerful

By Simon Allin

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THE Liberal Democrats proved there is still life in the old dog yet after it remarkably claimed two seats from the Conservatives on Maidstone Borough Council as voters took to the polls on Thursday.

But despite the gains in the county town - traditionally a strong Lib Dem area - the council continues with no one party in overall control.

Meanwhile, in Tunbridge Wells, 16 seats were up for grabs - the Tories making one gain - with the historically true blue council remaining staunchly Conservative.

Turnout in both was poor, with less than one in three eligible voters turning out.

With Westminster's ruling party normally given a bloody nose during mid-term local elections, that seemed far from the case in oh-so loyal Kent.

Solid performances in the council elections were backed up by Matthew Scott beating off nearest challenge Henry Bolton from Ukip to be crowned police and crime commissioner (full results -



**POLLS:** Maidstone council remains in no overall control despite Liberal gains over the Tories

see pages 19-21).

Fran Wilson, Liberal Democrat leader on Maidstone council, said she was "delighted" at her party's performance locally.

She said: "I am not surprised as we work extremely hard all the time - not just during the election period. Maidstone is always a big Lib Dem stronghold."

The Lib Dems took the Bridge and Coxheath and Hunton wards from the Tories, who also lost

Fant to Labour.

Conservative leader Annabelle Blackmore said: "It is a shame it is such a low turnout, and that has led to losses across the borough."

"The result in Coxheath and Hunton is particularly disappointing, having lost by one vote, but it shows that every single vote counts in an election."

In Tunbridge Wells, the Tories took Capel from the Lib Dems and Pembury from Independent

councillor Mike Thompson, who did not run for reelection.

The only other change was in St John's Ward, where Lib Dem candidate Peter Lidstone took the seat from the Conservatives' David Scott.

In the former Kent London boroughs of Bromley and Bexley, voters backed Tory Zac Goldsmith in his unsuccessful bid to become London Mayor - a vote won by Labour's Sadiq Khan.

## Appeal for foster carers to step forward to give homes to youngsters

AN APPEAL has been launched to encourage more people across Kent to become foster carers.

It comes after Kent County Council found huge numbers of children needing loving homes in the past year.

Now, to coincide with Foster Care Fortnight, which runs from May 16-29, KCC is calling for anyone who could offer a stable and loving home to children including those with a disability, sibling groups to keep brothers and sisters together and 16-18 year olds working towards independence, to step forward.

Those who foster with KCC will receive local support in their community as well as a local social workers.

There is also the opportunity to support unaccompanied asylum seeking young people who have often fled traumatic home lives and taken harrowing journeys to arrive in the county with no one to care for them.

KCC wants to recruit 150 more

households to its fostering service.

Cabinet member for specialist children's services, Peter Oakford, said: "Our foster carers do an amazing job supporting vulnerable children from our own county and those who have fled their homelands to come to Kent."

"Whether you foster a disabled child, a teenager or an unaccompanied asylum seeking young person, KCC makes sure you have all the skills and support you need to make sure you can do the best you can for the child in your care."

"Few roles are as rewarding as being a foster carer, knowing that the love and support you offer can change the course of a child's life."

Fostering is a paid role, and age, experience and marital status are no barrier.

Information events will take place in Lenham, Dartford and Dover later this month.

To find out more, call 03000 420002 or visit kentfostering.co.uk.

## Hunt on for owner of pitbull which attacked pensioner

A PENSIONER is this weekend recovering after a dog entered his home in Folkestone and left him with serious injuries after attacking him.

The incident happened at 1pm on Wednesday at an address in Coolinge Road. The dog entered the house and bit the householder, who was in his 70s, on the thumb.

A woman then emerged and led the dog away.

The victim had to be rushed to hospital.

The dog is described as looking like a white pitbull with black patches. Police say the woman is described as white, with medium length light brown hair.

Anyone with information should contact PC Victoria Morse on 01843 222289 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

## Bail extended in Bluewater sex attack investigation

TEN men arrested over a reported sex attack in Bluewater car park have had their bail extended.

Kent Police are investigating reports that the victim, a woman in her 20s, was attacked at the complex between 6.30pm and 9pm on Sunday March 6.

A 20-year-old man has had his bail extended until July 28, while two 18-year-old men, and a

19-year-old man had bail extended until September 7.

A 17-year-old boy, 20-year-old man and 23-year-old man received extensions until September 8, and three more aged 16, 17 and 19 had bail extended until September 9.

Police have confirmed all the men were white, English and non-Muslim, after claims she was attacked by a gang of Muslim men.





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## Can Mark Rylance add Bafta to his award haul?

ASHFORD born actor Mark Rylance will look to add another major award to his trophy cabinet this evening, as he attends the Bafta TV awards at the Royal Festival Hall.

The star, who won a best supporting actor Academy Award in January for his role in Steven Spielberg's Bridge of Spies movie, is nominated tonight for a character on the small screen.

He is among a strong shortlist for best actor for his portrayal of Thomas Cromwell in the BBC's highly regarded drama Wolf Hall - parts of which were filmed at both Penshurst Place near Tonbridge, and Dover Castle.

There's tough opposition though. Also in the category is Idris Elba (for Luther), Stephen Graham (This Is England) and Ben Whishaw (London Spy).



**RIP:** Becky Anne Morgan

## How did tragic Becky end up in the water?

A 17-YEAR-OLD girl whose body was pulled from the water off the coast of Broadstairs last Sunday has been identified as Becky Anne Morgan from Ramsgate.

Police were called at 5.01am on May 1 due to concern for the welfare of a person in the water at the Port of Ramsgate, and her body was recovered shortly after 7.45am that morning.

Now, detectives from the Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate are keen to speak to anyone who were in the area at the time.

Det Chief Insp Nick Gossett said: "We would like to speak to people who were in the area of Harbour Parade or around Ramsgate Sands, or who might have seen Becky during the evening on Saturday, going into Sunday.

"As it was a bank holiday weekend, the area was busy and if people have information which could help our investigation, we would ask them to contact us."

A 21-year-old man from Ramsgate was arrested in connection with the incident and has been released on police bail to return to a police station on June 24.

Anyone with information should call 01303 289600 quoting incident reference 01-244. Or call Crimestoppers, anonymously on 0800 555 111.

## Seaside secondary's new head as legal dispute is settled with predecessor

**By KoS reporter**

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A NEW head teacher this week took over the reins at the Community College Whitstable – as Kent County Council apologised to the former head teacher who was suspended at the end of last year.

Ana Gibson, formerly acting head at Folkestone's Pent Valley, is the long-term replacement to Helena Sullivan-Tighe who was removed from her post last year.

She launched a legal challenge against the move from the £85,000-a-year role – with Kent County Council this week confirming her suspension and subsequent disciplinary investigation have been withdrawn.

Mrs Gibson, an Army reservist, is believed to have a stricter disciplinary approach at the top of her agenda.

She took over at Pent Valley last June as acting head. She was brought in after a period of decline that has resulted in the school star-



**REBIRTH:** CCW has new leader

ing at closure due to dwindling numbers.

She was hired by the Swale Academies Trust, which took over the running of the school earlier this year, tasked with ensuring perform-

ance levels were boosted.

In a statement over Mrs Sullivan-Tighe's departure, KCC said: "Kent County Council and the Community College Whitstable's governing body wish to clarify the position following settlement of a legal action brought by Ms Sullivan-Tighe.

"Ms Sullivan-Tighe's suspension in November 2015 and subsequent disciplinary investigation have been withdrawn.

"We regret the impact these have had on her and thank her for her committed service to the college."

A statement from a representative for Ms Sullivan-Tighe said: "Ms Sullivan-Tighe has decided to leave her post of head teacher.

"She is very proud of what has been achieved at the college and for the wider community of Whitstable during her leadership.

"She wishes all associated with the college every success for the future."

Neither side said they would make any further comment on the settlement.

## Driver who killed trio in smash sentenced

A DRIVER from Birmingham who performed a U-turn on a Brookland road and collided with a motorcyclist, killing the rider and two of his passengers, has been given a suspended sentence.

Jason Brooker, 37, from Great Barr, had admitted three counts of causing death by careless driving and this week was sentenced at Canterbury Crown Court.

He crashed into motorcyclist, Malcolm Batt, 55, after missing a turn on the A259 Rye Road. His partner and her mother, in his car, were also killed.

He was sentenced to 12-months imprisonment, suspended for two years for each offence. The sentences will run concurrently. He was also disqualified from driving for three years and will be required to take an extended retest.

In addition to this he was ordered to carry out 200 hours of unpaid work.

Brooker's partner Dawn Roberts and her mother Gloria Roberts died as a result of their injuries.

## Farage fumes after security cash claims

UKIP leader Nigel Farage has denied using British taxpayers' cash to pay for bodyguards.

Mr Farage was speaking after the Daily Mail reported Ukup used EU money to fund £58,000 worth of security at five events last autumn.

The Ukup leader, who lives in Westerham, insisted the money was not for his personal protection, but to pay for security at party meetings.

Mr Farage, who complains that British taxpayers send £350 million to Brussels each week, said: "I am the only party leader, or senior political figure, who gets zero help, from the British government, even after my family was attacked last year. So, we have to fund the whole thing privately, which for a party the size of ours is very difficult indeed."

The Ukup leader insisted the costs involved related to "big public events" held by the party.

"That's less about me and more about the crowds that come, and making sure they are checked, and searched, and that good people who come along to attend political meetings can do so feeling safe."

## Teacher guilty of a string of sex charges

A FORMER teacher at a Goudhurst school has been convicted of sexually abusing two pupils during the 1980s.

Alan Morris, 71, had denied a string of historic offences against two teenage boys but was found guilty by a jury at Maidstone Crown Court.

During his time at the school, Morris, who now lives in Norfolk, had been a house master and was also in charge of the school choir.

He pled his victims with alcohol before abusing them. Morris pleaded not guilty to three charges of gross indecency with a child, three of indecent assault of a child and three other serious sexual assaults. He was convicted on all nine counts by a jury. He will be sentenced on May 18.

Det Con Donna Read said: "Sex offenders like Morris wreak incalculable damage on their victims, many who will suffer in silence for years, or throughout their whole lives.

"Thankfully in this case the two victims have shown extraordinary courage to come forward."



# MP demands answers on why town centre works delayed

By Tom Pyman

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TEMPERS are beginning to fray in Tonbridge after the long-running refurbishment of the town centre over ran its scheduled completion date.

It prompted the MP for Tonbridge and Malling, the Conservative Tom Tugendhat, to write to Paul Carter, leader of Kent County Council, to demand answers.

Works to improve the High Street, costing some £2.65m, were scheduled to have finished last week, but residents in Tonbridge are becoming increasingly frustrated by delays, which are having an adverse effect on business and causing many to be late to school and work.

The work is seen as essential to transforming the heart of the town and breathing new life into its traditional retail centre.

Mr Tugendhat said in an open letter to Cllr Carter: "Over the past few days, I have been contacted by a number of residents and businesses to express their dismay at the latest delays to the roadworks on Tonbridge High Street, and to highlight the severe impact of the traffic congestion in the town.

"Since the closure of the High Street at Medway Wharf Road, congestion is now present on all major routes into town.



**FUTURE:** Plans of how Tonbridge High Street will look

"The roadworks on the High Street should be finished by now, so residents and shoppers could enjoy it over the Bank Holiday weekend.

"Unfortunately, many now have concerns about how they will get about our town.

"I would be grateful if you could put into place all possible measures to speed the works up to ensure that they don't have an impact on trade for business.

"The congestion this week has been unacceptable and I would urge you to do everything in your power to ensure that we

do not have another week of chaos."

Despite repeated efforts, KCC failed to comment when contacted by KoS this week.

Tonbridge is banking heavily on the work having already suffered the disappointment, two years ago, of when supermarket giant Sainsbury's pulled the plug on a multi-million scheme, which would have brought a new cinema, restaurants and leisure centre, plus improvements to the High Street area.

## Pensioner dies after supermarket strike

A 71-year-old hit by a car in a supermarket car park in March died of his injuries on Monday.

The man from Sevenoaks was walking with a trolley when he was hit by a car outside Sainsbury's in Otford Road at around 5pm on March 2.

He was taken to hospital with head injuries but passed away earlier this week.

Witnesses who have not yet spoken with officers are asked to call 01622 798538.

## Lady of Shalott loan to Tate Britain expo

TUNBRIDGE Wells Museum & Art Gallery is loaning a famous photograph to an upcoming exhibition at Tate Britain.

It will provide the Lady of Shalott, created by local Henry Peach Robinson in 1861, as an early example of art photography. It has previously been displayed in Paris and Washington.

## Images of Kent winner

THE winner of tickets to the Leeds Castle Classical Concert this summer, drawn from those who had their pictures printed during April on our Images of Kent page, is Gravesend's Peter Read.

To be in with a chance to win another pair, in our monthly draw, see the full details opposite our letters' page.

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# Golden girl Lizzy ties the knot in May Day sunshine

WINTER Olympic skeleton champion Lizzy Yarnold has tied the knot to her boyfriend at a church near her West Kingsdown home – just two years after they met.

The star posted a picture of herself on her Twitter account (pictured) in a glowing white dress and new husband James Roche outside the church.

After that, the pair dashed off for a secret honeymoon. A spokesman for the star said: "She wanted to keep it all very quiet and make it a family only event."

"It was a lovely day and she is delighted with the way it all went."

The pair met during the Winter Olympics of 2014, during which Ms Yarnold won gold. He helped design the sled used by the British team and soon got to know the former



Maidstone Grammar School for Girls student.

Her Twitter caption to go alongside the happy wedding picture read: "Happy May Day everyone, hope the sun shone for

you too. #Mr&Mrs".

Among those passing on messages of good luck were TV and radio star Clare Balding and Olympic swimmers Rebecca Adlington and Sharron Davis.

## Police warning ahead of yet more Dover protests

DOVER is bracing itself for yet more trouble at the end of this month after it was confirmed another far-right march is due to take place.

Kent Police says it is planning 'a proportionate response' to the demonstrations scheduled to take place on May 28 and 29.

Exact timings and locations are subject to change and it is currently unknown how many people are expected to attend.

But there will be fears that, once again, the far-right groups will find themselves on a collision course with anti-fascist groups opposing them.

A police spokesperson said: "Kent Police respects anyone's right to peaceful protest, and its intentions will be to balance that right with the rights of other people in Dover such as

members of the public and local businesses.

"Groups cannot be prevented from entering Dover or protesting as it is a basic human right, and any group seeking to protest peacefully and legitimately will be facilitated as long as there is not a significant threat to public safety."

"Kent Police and other partner agencies will continue to work closely with the local community in the lead-up to the demonstrations, and every effort will be made to ensure it is business as usual in the town."

It comes just weeks after another demonstration in Dover, during which a dozen people were arrested after scenes turned ugly following protests from opposing groups who converged on the town centre.

### Charity football match

FIFA World Cup winner Ossie Ardiles will be one of the big names at a charity football match at Maidstone's Gallagher Stadium on June 5.

He will line up with the likes of Trevor Sinclair and former Ashford schoolboy Neil 'Razor' Rud-dock to raise money for Pilgrims Hospice.

### Veteran's French medal

A SECOND World War veteran from Welling has been awarded the Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur for his part in the liberation of France.

George Haslam, 92, was presented with the honour by Blind Veterans UK trustee Colonel Mike Brooke OBE.

### Attend CCG meeting

The governing body of the NHS Thanet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will hold a public meeting on May 10 at the Glo Gen building in Margate from 4pm to 5pm.

Items on the agenda include finance and public engagements. For details and how to attend, see [www.thanetccg.nhs.uk](http://www.thanetccg.nhs.uk).

### Play area's £150k boost

WORK began this week on a £150,000 refurbishment of a play area in Gravesend.

New equipment and play facilities are being installed on the existing tarmac and wood bark chipping space adjacent to the tennis courts at Woodlands Park to help attract more children to the area.

## 20TH-22ND MAY, 2016 A CELEBRATORY WEEKEND IN CHILHAM VILLAGE

2016 IS THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BUILDING OF CHILHAM CASTLE BY SIR DUDLEY DIGGES IN 1616.

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BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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## Top Three Stories



### 1. Bishop backs pledge

More refugee children are being welcomed

### 2. Board game champion

Westgate-on-Sea micropub rises to the top

### 3. Most wanted burglar

Police hunt for Jamal Dreyf in Folkestone

## The Essential Guide:



### ...to Dreamland

Everything you need to know about Margate's amusement park



**FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY:** Dover Athletic were beaten at home by Forest Green Rovers last weekend, before they prepared to face the same opposition twice more in the space of four days in their quest for promotion from the National League

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# Gun shots ring out in village as man on bail is killed by police

IPCC launches investigation after pre-planned police operation ends in death of William Smith, 36, who was wanted in connection with the murder of Biddenden pensioner Roy Blackman in March...

**T**WO firearms officers shot four times during a pre-planned police operation that ended in a man on bail being left dead in Goudhurst, investigators revealed this week.

William Smith, 36, died from gunshot wounds during the incident in Smiths Lane at around 8.30pm last Sunday, May 1.

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) is investigating the circumstances of Mr Smith's death and investigators attended the scene on Sunday evening to oversee forensic examinations.

A separate team of investigators attended Kent Police's headquarters to oversee the post-incident procedure.

A post-mortem examination has established Mr Smith died from gunshot wounds and his body was formally identified by his family on Thursday afternoon.

His details had been circulated in connection with the murder of Biddenden pensioner Roy Blackman at the end of last week.

Mr Smith's name was linked to the death just hours after the shooting but was not confirmed until later in the week.

Ballistic analysis and statements provided by officers indicate that two Kent Police firearms officers discharged their weapons twice each during the incident.

What appear to be two non-police issue firearms have been recovered from the scene and are undergoing forensic testing.

Detailed forensic examination of the scene is ongoing. No body-worn video footage is available.

The officers involved in the incident have provided both initial accounts and full accounts to the IPCC in a process which was overseen by IPCC investigators.

The IPCC is continuing to keep Mr Smith's family updated with developments.

Kent Police last week issued an appeal for information regarding Mr Smith's whereabouts, as part of their investigation into the brutal murder of a widowed pensioner in his Biddenden cottage earlier this year, for which Mr Smith was on bail.

Roy Blackman, 73, was found with multiple blunt force injuries at his home in Headcorn Road shortly before 9am on March 21 in an attack that is believed to be part of a burglary.

An air rifle and a 5ft high, 1.5ft wide metal safe was reportedly stolen from the house in the incident.

Neighbours of the retired businessman admitted that Mr Blackman's residence was one of a number of homes targeted by burglars in recent years and expressed their shock at the death of a popular man.

His family paid tribute to "a kind, wise and private man" who was a self-taught car mechanic that enjoyed a hobby of breeding rare wildfowl.

Mark Love, 37, of Frittenden Road, Staplehurst, has been charged with murder and aggravated burglary in connection with Mr Blackman's death, Kent Police said.

Six others have been arrested and subsequently bailed in connection with the death, which the police are continuing to investigate.



**INVESTIGATION:** William Smith (left) and pensioner Roy Blackman (right)

## Justice ministry takes on scandal-hit youth prison

**T**HE Ministry of Justice is to take over the running of a scandal-hit youth prison, according to reports.

Medway Secure Training Centre in Rochester, Kent, was at the centre of claims that staff assaulted children.

The Government will start operating the facility – currently run by G4S – through the National Offender Management Service by the end of July, according to the BBC.

The MoJ has not confirmed the reports.

A spokesman for the department said: "Our priority will always be the safety and welfare of young people in custody - that is why the Justice Secretary set up an Independent Improvement Board to examine the running of Medway STC."

"This sits alongside a wider review of youth justice, led by Charlie Taylor. We are considering a range of options and will announce the next steps in due course."

A police investigation was launched after Medway was the subject of a BBC Panorama expose earlier this year.

Five men arrested on suspicion of either child neglect or assault were released on bail.

Ralph Marchant, the unit's director, stood down after the claims were made.

In February, G4S announced that it was selling its UK children's services business, which includes 13 children's homes and two STCs - Medway and Oakhill in Milton Keynes.

In a statement on Thursday, G4S said: "The behaviour of some of our staff at Medway revealed in January was completely unacceptable."

"We have given our full support to the review being conducted by the Ministry's Improvement Board and will consider their findings carefully when they are published."

Allegations over behaviour were made during a Panorama programme on the BBC which was broadcast in January.

It apparently showed staff mistreating and abusing inmates.

The probe into the claims centre on 10 boys aged between 14-17.

Further allegations have been made since the programme shone a spotlight on the centre.



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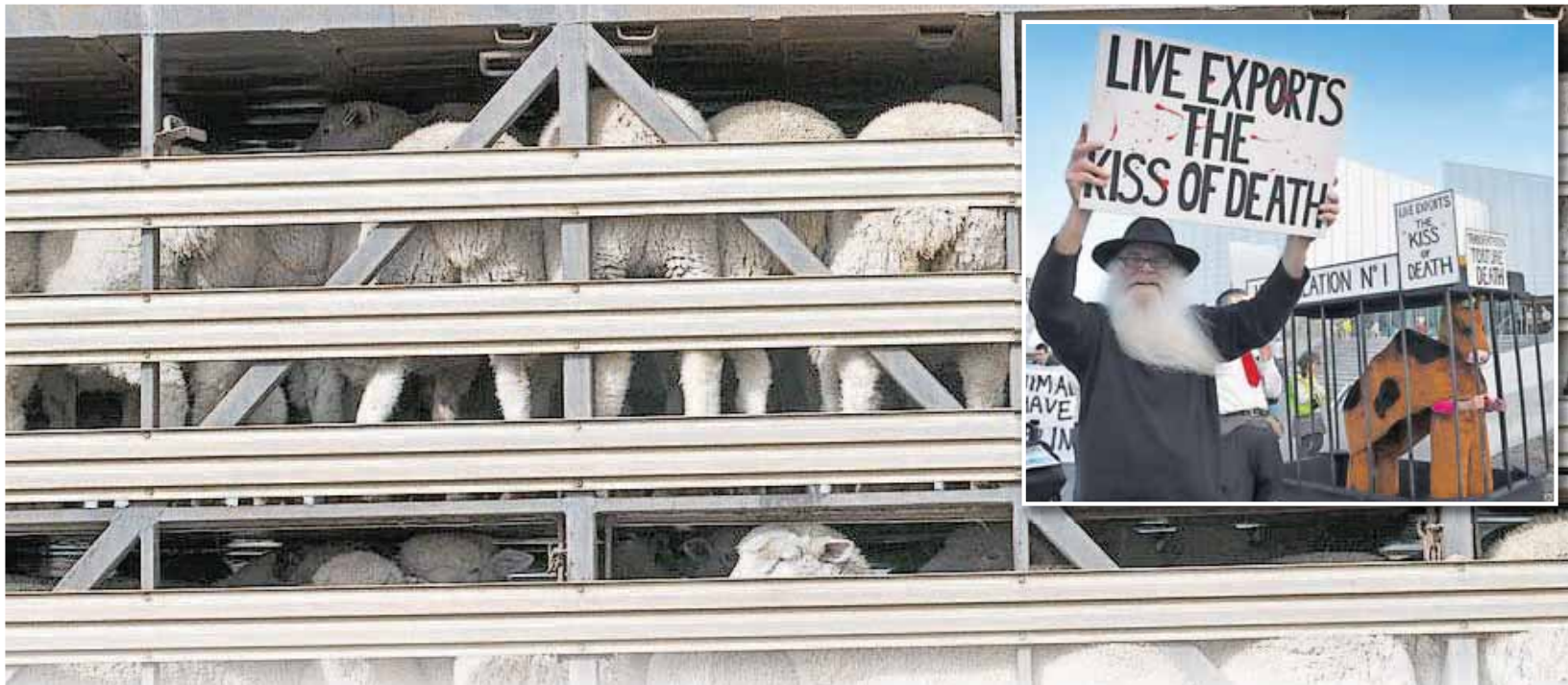
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**CONTROVERSIAL:** The live export of animals is controversial and protesters want to see the trade ended as soon as possible but will leaving the EU make putting an end to the trade easier?

# Live animal exports in spotlight as protesters eye EU referendum

As one Kent MP bids to give local councils the power to ban live exports, farmers and animal welfare groups say its 'political will' at home and not Europe that could curb the trade writes **Simon Allin...**

**F**ARMERS and animal welfare groups have poured cold water on claims that a Brexit would enable the UK to ban live animal exports.

The trade has proved a controversial one in recent years, with shipments heading to the continent from Ramsgate and Dover.

But according to George Eustice, minister of state for farming, food and the marine environment, European Union rules mean the government does not have the power to prevent livestock being transported to other countries to be slaughtered.

The Vote Leave campaign says some 49,712 live lambs and sheep were exported across the Channel in 2012, and claims many of these ended up in halal slaughterhouses in France, or were sent to third countries outside the EU with poor animal welfare regulations.

Mr Eustice claimed the EU rules are harming animals and run contrary to the views of most British people.

He said: "There is great public concern about the continued export of live lambs across the channel for slaughter.

"Some campaigners have argued that we should amend national legislation to introduce a targeted ban on some live exports from British ports.

"However, the EU has made clear that such a ban would be against EU law. If we were to leave the EU, a future British government would be free to consider introducing targeted

restrictions of this sort on ethical grounds."

In 2012, Thanet District Council tried to ban animal exports from Ramsgate following an incident in which more than 40 sheep had to be put down after being transported in unfit conditions.

It was forced to backtrack, however, when its actions were ruled to be a breach of EU free trade rules.

As a result, the council racked up a bill of almost £6m in damages and legal costs.

MP for South Thanet Craig Mackinlay is putting forward a ten minute rule bill in the House of Commons on May 10 to amend the harbours, docks, and piers clauses act 1847, so local councils have the power to ban live animal exports.

Doing so, he says, would prevent a repeat of the 2012 debacle and ensure taxpayers would no longer have to compensate foreign shipping companies.

"What George is saying is entirely correct," Mr Mackinlay said. "Local people should have the power to prevent such a trade.

"If we had a domestic law in place, it could be overturned at the free market level. This issue goes right to the heart of localism."

However, animal welfare groups claim that a vote for Brexit would not necessarily lead to the end of the live animal trade.

Isobel Hutchinson, a campaign manager at Animal Aid in Tonbridge, told KoS the matter is not as straightforward as Vote Leave claims it to be.

"Even if we were to leave the European Union, it would still depend on political will, and the track record of the current government is very poor," she said.

"In terms of the hunting act and the badger cull, for instance, it has a poor track record, and I would not be optimistic about them taking forward legislation on animals.

"Animal Aid is against all forms of cruelty and export by sea does not cause all of this suffering – there is also the issue of road accidents and the terrible distress that these journeys cause them."

Her views were echoed by Peter Stevenson, chief policy adviser at Compassion in World Farming (CIWF), who also criticised the government's record on animal welfare issues.

"The reason we have not had improvements in recent years is because there has been no appetite for improvements from the government or the farming industry, so it has not been the EU holding us back," he said.

"CIWF is neither for nor against the EU, but if we left the EU, there would still be some hurdles.

"We would have to negotiate bilateral trade agreements with our former partners, and we would be governed by the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which is still quite strong, and we would have to present a good case to ban live exports."

Mr Stevenson explained that a ban may be possible if the government could show the WTO that public sentiment in

the UK was against live exports.

Kevin Attwood, Kent delegate for the National Farmers Union (NFU), suggested Mr Eustice was being disingenuous by suggesting Brexit would afford the UK more control over its exports.

"Our production methods allow us to produce lamb in a more competitive way than other EU countries, so the big issue is if we leave, will they allow us to export lamb in any form?" he said.

"It is a very misleading statement in terms of appealing to the animal rights lobby and not speaking as a farming minister within Defra.

"He is allowing his views on Brexit to colour his views on issues that fall within his ministerial post. He should be explaining how he imagines exports post-Brexit.

"If you look at our trade post-Brexit, if you are trying to negotiate along the Norway model, then clearly there is free movement of labour and trade, and most regulations and conditions will apply post-Brexit.

"If you are going to a world trade basis, then we would have to negotiate a whole set of conditions, not only with Europe but with the rest of the world as well."

NFU spokesperson Frank Languish, a farmer who also runs a livestock transport business, said he did not anticipate much change in the event of Brexit.

"We will have to abide by the same rules and regulations and there is a much higher level of welfare written into those than there was in our old

domestic legislation," he commented.

"The best thing that needs to happen is for the big ferry companies to carry them again, because the speed they can operate at is good for the animals."

Ferry firms rejected the trade due to a public backlash.

Keith Taylor MEP, the Green Party's animals spokesperson and the vice-president of the EU's animal welfare intergroup, opposes live animal exports but believes leaving the EU is not the solution.

"Not one post-EU scenario has produced a credible trade plan for Britain that would not include allowing access to the European Union's 500-million-strong single market," he said.

"Abiding by EU trade rules, including the respecting the principle of the free movement of trade, would be the cost of that access.

"Banning the trade outright looks, at best, unlikely, at worst, impossible, outside the EU. However, as a part of the EU, we have, at least, been able to push for tougher welfare protections for exported animals.

"The introduction of stronger regulations that impose maximum journey times and better conditions that align with animal welfare science could, effectively, bring about an end to live exports from the UK."

■ What do you think? Share your views and join the debate. Write to The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP, or email us at [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk).





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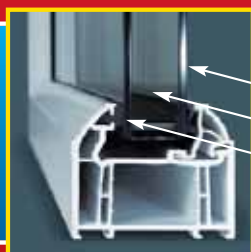
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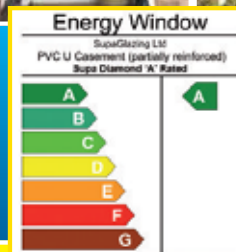
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KOS 2/16



# Fresh rabies fear over rise in illegal puppy trade via ports

One animal charity says it has taken on more than 150 pups this year alone as importers take advantage of the demand for 'designer dogs'...

**By Simon Allin**

[simon.allin@archant.co.uk](mailto:simon.allin@archant.co.uk)

**I**LLEGAL puppy smuggling into Kent from the European Union is continuing to grow - and it could only be a matter of time before the UK experiences cases of rabies, an animal charity has once again warned.

The Dogs Trust claims measures taken by the government to stem the tide of puppy smuggling are insufficient, and further action needs to be taken, including visual checks on all dogs entering the UK on the Pet Transport Scheme (PETS).

In 2014, the charity published a report that highlighted the influx of illegally landed puppies following the relaxation of PETS two years previously, which meant pets no longer had to be quarantined for a six-month period before entering the country.

Instead, a system of pet passports was introduced, along with mandatory microchipping of animals, to ensure they had the required vaccinations and it was safe for pets to travel.

The government tightened up the scheme in response to the Dogs Trust's initial investigation, but the charity claims this has done nothing to stop unscrupulous individuals from smuggling animals.

In Canterbury, the Dogs Trust recently rescued a litter of Pomeranian puppies that were destined to be sold online for thousands of pounds as part of the fashion trend for 'hand-bag dogs'.

Since December 2015, the charity has cared for more than 150 illegally imported puppies, and it has made a pledge to provide care and quarantine for hundreds of animals seized from smugglers.

Adam Levy, Dogs Trust Canterbury rehoming centre manager, told KoS: "We have been full since we started and as soon as we have the space we need more, but there are far too many dogs, so they have gone to our other centres locally.

"What we are seeing is just the tip of the iceberg - more of these still are getting through that are not being seen."

Smugglers are exploiting a loophole in the system, forging passports and falsifying vaccination records, which compromises the animals' health and poses a risk to public safety.

Some of the puppies that are illegally traded are vaccinated before the legal minimum age of 12 weeks - and before the vaccines are fully effective.

The rewards for those involved in smuggling can be huge - a dealer who transports 160 pug puppies to the UK each year could have an annual turnover of £104,000.

Meanwhile, penalties for those caught trafficking do not act as a deterrent - only a small fine is imposed on the transporter (often along the lines of paying for quarantine bills) and rarely enforced.

Mr Levy said: "Because we had done this investigation we agreed to put up funding in the hope that Border Force would do more stop and search.

"There needs to be more funding and more staff. For Border Force, it is hard for them to see what age the pup is, so they are coming in with false passports from countries with rabies. It is only a matter of time until we get a positive case of rabies.

"Defra [the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs] have their head in the sand about this. We are working with Border Force but they do not have enough resources on the ground, and there is no funding for quarantine. This should be a government funded scheme but it is not - and we are picking up the costs."

Mr Levy pointed out that if dogs are not allowed to travel until they are six months old it would solve the problem, as there is no demand for such animals.

A spokesperson for Defra commented: "We are committed to putting a stop to the abhorrent illegal trade of puppies and the UK has one of the toughest pet border checking regimes in Europe.

"Every pet dog travelling to Britain on an approved route has its microchip and passport checked, plus dogs imported for sale or rehoming must have a health certificate signed by a vet in their country of origin. The Animal and Plant Health Agency also carries out random checks on dogs brought into the country.

"The chief veterinary officer has written to the authorities in a number of EU countries



North & West

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**RABIES:** The litter of Pomeranian pups found trying to be smuggled into Kent (left) and animal campaigner and Tory MP Sir Roger Gale (above)

about reports of falsified documents being obtained and will continue to raise this issue with the relevant countries."

However, when asked to comment on the Dogs Trusts' call for visual checks on all dogs entering the UK, Defra would only reiterate that the UK has one of the toughest pet border checking regimes in Europe.

"Defra feel we have better checks, but we are still seeing countless numbers of dogs being signed off by vets," Mr Levy commented.

North Thanet MP Sir Roger Gale has been working closely with the Dogs Trust on the issue of animal smuggling.

Sir Roger told KoS he believes adequate measures are in place to deal with the problem but they are not being enforced properly.

He pointed out that vehicles are regularly checked for smuggled drugs and people, and that they should be properly checked for animals as well.

"You can't prevent everything, but if you can check vehicles thoroughly as they come in, which we should be doing anyway, you can be checking for puppies," he said.

Although he is not in favour of Brexit, Sir Roger criticised the Schengen Zone, which he believes helps the illegal trade by abolishing border controls between EU countries.

While dog smugglers and insufficient checks clearly play a huge role in smuggling, much of the demand for puppies is caused by members of the public emulating celebrity culture's 'handbag dogs', along with the ability to buy animals over the internet – what Mr Levy called a 'click and collect' culture.

Sir Roger added: "You should not be able to buy animals online. You should go and see the litter, see the puppies with the bitch and buy them from a registered breeder."

"Of course it can be expensive – but over the lifetime of a dog, which can be 12 years, and in context of all the other things the owners have to pay, it is not much."

## WHAT IS RABIES?

RABIES is a very serious viral infection that targets the brain and nervous system.

You can catch rabies if you are bitten by an infected animal and haven't been vaccinated.

It's almost always fatal once symptoms develop, but can be prevented if treatment is given promptly after exposure.

There are an estimated 60,000 deaths from human rabies each year worldwide. Most cases occur in the developing world, particularly in Africa and Asia.

In the UK, rabies is not found in the animal population (with the exception of bats) and infections are almost always picked up during travel abroad.

There have been no cases of human rabies acquired in the UK since 1902, apart from a case of rabies acquired in a bat-handler from an infected bat in 2002.

The last recorded case of rabies in the UK was in 2012. The patient, who died, contracted the disease after being bitten by a dog in India.

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# Heroes raise £200k with bike ride

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

**F**OUR days and 350 miles after setting out from Bobbing, near Sittingbourne, 100 intrepid cyclists rode into the Dutch city of Amsterdam and in doing so raised an incredible £200,000 for charity.

The Demelza 101 has become an annual event and one of the big fundraisers for the children's hospice.

Described as being 100 riders with one great cause – hence the 101 – the riders completed their remarkable feat last weekend.

They left Bobbing before riding along the Kent coast – through Whitstable, and down through Deal before reaching Dover and catching a ferry to Calais.

The group of riders then cycled through Bruges before reaching the outskirts of Amsterdam.

With cyclists of many different speeds taking part, they all gathered some seven miles outside of Amsterdam before riding, en masse, to the finish line.

There the riders, from across Kent, East Sussex and south east London, arrived to a rapturous welcome from their families and representatives for Demelza Hospice Care for Children, including its chief executive, Ryan Campbell.

Event coordinator Emma Austen said: "We are so proud of every one of



**DELIGHT:** The successful riders after arriving in Amsterdam

the Demelza 101 riders, and amazed by how much they have raised, which will make an enormous difference to the care and support we give.

"It's a big ask of people to take on such a tough challenge, and we are hugely grateful that so many were willing to step up to be 100 riders with one cause."

After completing the gruelling event, they then caught the Eurostar

home before another welcoming committee at Ebbsfleet International Station.

Entries to take part in next year's ride are already open, in addition to a trek or triathlon in May 2017 in the Lake District.

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# KENT POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS: THE RESULTS



**VICTORY:** Candidates learned their fate on Friday afternoon as the results were revealed at Dover. Matthew Scott triumphed - pictured right. Pictures: Tom Pyman

## Ukip fumes over 'tribal politics' as Matthew Scott is crowned PCC

But disappointing turnout for police and crime commissioner poll once again as just 21.5% show up

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

**M**ATTHEW Scott was crowned Kent's new police and crime commissioner on Friday as the Conservatives' domination of local politics in the county continued.

Speaking after the election - which again will make headlines for the poor turnout after just 21.5 per cent of eligible voters made their voice heard - he vowed to deliver on his pre-election promises.

He said: "To be elected is an honour and real privilege. I promise I will do my best by all the residents in Kent whether they voted or not, and regardless of who they voted for.

"I will do what I can to support victims of crime, to cut crime and make sure that all parts of Kent feel valued. I mean what I say. I will stand up for people and encourage them to engage with me as police and crime commissioner and work together with some of the other candidates who have stood on the issues that really matter."

In the end, the result of only the second election for Kent's police and crime commissioner went to form - and became a two-horse race between the Conservative and Ukip candidates.

Labour came third with Tristan Osborne, Independent Gurvinder Sandher fourth, Dave Naghi from the Liberal Democrats fifth and Steve Uncles of the English Democrats, last.

In the first round of voting Tory Mr Scott took nine of the county's 13 constituencies with Ukip's Henry Bolton winning in Swale, Thanet, Shepway and Medway - traditionally strong areas for his party.

To win outright on the first round of votes, one candidate needed to take over 50 per cent of the vote. With Mr Scott on 33.1 per cent and Mr Bolton on 27.5 per cent, it meant a second round was needed, which took into account second preference votes.

Mr Scott won that comfortably to complete his victory.

In total, the young Tory won 104,558 votes combining first and second preferences, compared to Mr Bolton's 87,978.

It is certainly a remarkable leap in responsibility for a candidate who just two months ago was office manager for David Evennett, the Conservative MP for Bexleyheath.

At just 31, he is less than half the age of the out-going PCC, Ann Barnes, 70. He also becomes the first political figure to be elected to the role; Mrs Barnes having ridden an independent ticket to victory.

He vowed prior to the election to cut the salary for the post - currently £85,000 - and not claim any expenses

while in the role.

A delighted Mr Scott added: "I think it's largely been a positive campaign and I'd like to thanks to Henry, Dave, Tristan and Gurvinder for making this a campaign about issues and not about people or their background."

For Ukip, the strong showing is another sign that its supporters have kept faith with them. They are now consistently second in the polls to the ruling Tories in the county, with strong showings in local, county, national and European elections.

Mr Bolton, however, said the result left a bitter taste in his mouth. He said: "Of course I'm disappointed but we've done what we could in this environment."

"I was asked by Ukip to stand because of my competency to do the job. But the people of Kent have voted to elect someone who is a nice bloke but has no relevant background and that can only be because they have voted tribally rather than for what the job actually is - perhaps they don't understand."

"We've tried to inform that but there's only so much we can do. This has made me quite cross because it's highly damaging for British society - we need more pluralism in our politics because it's about the good of the people and the country."

"Public safety and security is not about tribal politics. I was the only

candidate in this race who was a former regular police officer and have been working on these issues on an international level."

Labour's Tristan Osborne, a popular Medway councillor, said his performance - they polled 19 per cent of the vote - was encouraging and proved that the party is far from imploding under new leader Jeremy Corbyn.

He said: "My hope is that my own ideas that I have put on the table will be taken up."

Independent candidate Gurvinder Sandher said he exceeded his own expectations. He polled just under 10 per cent of all first round votes, taking 26,221 across the county.

He told KoS: "I think on the whole it's been a really positive campaign and having set a target of 20,000 votes, to get well over 25,000 is fantastic."

"I'd like to congratulate the winner and look forward to working with them soon, because for me, I'll continue to be working with the police as an advisor and a critical friend, that doesn't change."

"I've got absolutely no regrets, it's been an enjoyable experience and one I can take a lot of positives from, and to those who took the time to vote for me, I'm very grateful."

He beat the Liberal Democrats' Dave Naghi into fifth place county-wide - only Mr Naghi's home town of Maidstone showed him any sort of

support, Elevating him into third place between the Tories and Ukip.

Mr Naghi was left disillusioned about the whole process.

He told us: "It's a really disappointing turnout but it's completely unfair because the government haven't allowed us to get any literature out there."

"This is simply politics for people with money. They're spending £9 million on the EU referendum but we aren't able to really get our voice heard, so clearly they don't value the role as much as they say. What's the point in running again? It'll clash with the general election next time so there's only going to be one winner once again."

Steve Uncles, the English Democrat candidate, finished - as expected - bottom of the pile. However, he did spring two surprises in Gravesham and Dartford where he narrowly beat the Liberal Democrat candidate Dave Naghi.

But questions will once again be raised about turnout for this election.

In November 2012, the lowest turnout in UK history saw a national average of just 15 per cent vote for the first PCC elections. Kent was fractionally above that at 16.3 per cent.

This time around, the turnout was a mere 21.5 per cent - a figure swollen by around 32 per cent turning out for local council elections in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells.



# KENT POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS: THE RESULTS

## FULL FIRST ROUND RESULTS FROM ALL 13 KENT DISTRICTS AND TURNOUT DETAILS FOR PCC ELECTIONS

### ASHFORD

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 5,113; **Matthew Scott (Con) 6,175**; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 2,890; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 1,850; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 978; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 620

### CANTERBURY

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 5,059; **Matthew Scott (Con) 6,296**; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 4,421; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 2,410; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 1,644; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 626

### DARTFORD

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 3,906; **Matthew Scott (Con) 4,077**; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 3,525; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 1,391; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 429; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 484

### DOVER

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 5,032; **Matthew Scott (Con) 5,773**; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 4,717; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 1,414; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 813; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 606

### GRAVESHAM

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 3,140; **Matthew Scott (Con) 3,788**; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 3,170; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 2,765; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 464; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 466

### MAIDSTONE

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 9,079; **Matthew Scott (Con) 11,309**; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 4,753; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 2,955;

Dave Naghi (LibDem) 6,228; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 997

### MEDWAY

**Henry Bolton (Ukip) 10,289**; Matthew Scott (Con) 9,968; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 8,419; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 3,203; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 1,335; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 1,200

### SEVENOAKS

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 4,530; **Matthew Scott (Con) 7,067**; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 2,468; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 1,463; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 1,125; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 407

### SHEPWAY

**Henry Bolton (Ukip) 6,641**; Matthew Scott (Con) 5,038; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 2,576; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 1,696; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 926; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 619

### SWALE

**Henry Bolton (Ukip) 6,194**; Matthew Scott (Con) 5,172; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 3,672; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 1,486; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 838; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 624

### THANET

**Henry Bolton (Ukip) 5,555**; Matthew Scott (Con) 4,950; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 3,641; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 1,341; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 750; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 617

### TONBRIDGE & MALLING

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 4,239; **Matthew Scott (Con) 8,214**; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 1,803; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 2,817; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 1,234; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 449

### TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Henry Bolton (Ukip) 4,522; **Matthew Scott (Con) 10,569**; Tristan Osborne (Lab) 3,909; Gurvinder Sandher (Ind) 2,444; Dave Naghi (LibDem) 2,837; Steve Uncles (Eng Dem) 596



Matthew Scott  
(Conservative)



Gurvinder Sandher  
(Independent)



Henry Bolton  
(Ukip)



Dave Naghi  
(Liberal Democrats)



Steve Uncles  
(English Democrats)



Tristan Osborne  
(Labour)

### TURNOUT PERCENTAGE

Ashford	20.0
Canterbury	19.4
Dartford	18.9
Dover	22.2
Gravesham	19.0
Maidstone	32.1
Medway	18.3
Sevenoaks	20.1
Shepway	22.5
Swale	18.3
Thanet	17.6
Tonbridge & Malling	20.9
Tunbridge Wells	32.2

# 21.5%

Average turnout across the county



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## How PCC came to be embraced

While many still struggle to understand the role, it has won over some initial critics, among them the chairman of the Kent Police Federation who is convinced the PCC works as a vital point of contact...

**W**HILE the jury was out over the point of police and crime commissioners when less than two out of 10 of us voted in the inaugural 2012 election, the role has gathered momentum since.

Yet many still remain unclear as to what the police and crime commissioner does.

Once upon a time, Kent Police - along with all other forces in the country - were overseen by the Kent Police Authority (KPA). A deliberately low-key layer of governance, it oversaw the police's actions and held it to account.

But in 2010, it was in the sights of Westminster. The Conservative manifesto vowed to introduce an elected commissioner to replace them, while the Liberal Democrats - who would become coalition government partners - wanted more elected individuals and more accountability. Thus a little over two years later, the police authorities were disbanded and candidates lined up to take their place.

To be clear, the PCC does not decide



**POLICE:** PCC holds a key role

what police power is deployed where or when. The operational side of the force remains fully in the hands of the

chief constable - the county's most senior police officer.

The PCC is there to hold the chief constable to account and influence priorities. To ensure they are delivering the police and crime plan and if not to demand why not. Ultimately, they can fire, and indeed hire, the chief constable.

The PCC also handles the budget and acts as the public-facing middle man between the public and the officers.

Overseen by the Kent and Medway crime panel - a cross-party committee which holds the PCC themselves to account - those in office must also sign an oath vowing to work politically impartially.

Ian Pointon, chairman of the Kent Police Federation, which represents rank and file officers, is one of those who has changed his mind about the role.

He said: "After seeing the PCC role in action, I'm now convinced there are a number of advantages over the old system. It makes accountability far more focused, with the PCC a single point of contact to hold the chief constable to account."

### ANN BARNES BOWS OUT WEDNESDAY

ANN Barnes will remain, officially at least, the county's police and crime commissioner until Wednesday.

The newly elected commissioner will officially take over the reins as of midnight on May 11 - bringing down the curtain on Mrs Barnes' long career as a key figure within Kent Police.

Six years as chairman of the Kent Police Authority and just under four as commissioner, means those closest to her don't expect her to "be the type of person who goes and spends her retirement on a beach somewhere".

At 70, the former teacher, who announced earlier this year she would not stand for re-election, has no new job to go to, but aides describe her as "someone who is going to want to



keep herself busy".

Mrs Barnes, who turned down interview requests this week, treated staff to a farewell lunch, with colleagues saying the mood was light.

The new commissioner will take over the existing support team which serves the PCC's office - but it is not yet known who will be retained, or if a new look team will be

drafted in. No decision on that is expected immediately.

It is not known if the successful candidate will meet staff before officially taking over the role on Thursday or if they will request a meeting with the out-going Mrs Barnes to discuss key challenges on the horizon.

Staff, who have been preparing for weeks for the takeover, say they are confident of a smooth transition.

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# Find a baby bird on the path? Leave it alone, warns RSPB

From dive-bombing seagulls to lonely chicks, **Chris Murphy** on nesting season

**I**T'S that time of year when freshly hatched birds are taking their first tentative 'steps' away from the nest, and the experts are warning the public to leave them alone.

While it may be tempting to scoop up an apparent 'lost' bird, the RSPB in Kent is urging people to allow nature to take its course.

Even if they are on public pathways or gardens, both in our towns and rural areas, the charity says.

And it is sometimes the safer option, particularly when it comes to baby seagulls.

Their parents are notoriously protective of their young, and have been known to dive-bomb anyone straying too close to their chicks across Kent's coastal towns.

Some in the county have in the past been hurt by gulls' claws or beaks after getting too close. It's possible victims are not even aware they had strayed too close to a gull chick, the RSPB said.

RSPB Kent spokesman Martin Jensen told us: "Herring gulls take parenting very seriously – whether

they are on an unpopulated coastal island or in a town or city around the extensive Kent coastline.

"Defending their nest and their young is part of their DNA. On a coastal island, if a crow or a great black-backed gull tries to steal and eat an egg or chick, it will be repelled with all the parent gull's strength and other gulls will come to assist. It is no different in the towns and cities of Kent.

"If the gulls believe their eggs or young are in danger, they understandably become very protective and can be aggressive in defence of their young."

Both people and pets can experience this type of gull behaviour which can be a very frightening.

But the organisation stresses the gull's motives are actually honourable because they are protecting their young.

Mr Jensen said: "Gulls are a natural part of our county's wildlife and have always been a feature of coastal towns and villages. But while gull populations along the coast are declining, numbers of gulls nesting in



**CARE:** Seagulls can get aggressive if their chicks fall from nest

some towns and cities are increasing.

"The reasons are complicated. It's only since the 1940s that household waste previously composted at home ended up at landfill. The Clean Air Act stopped it being burnt.

"This easily available food waste in landfill coincided with a decrease in the gull's natural marine food. Gulls are clever, adaptable, opportunistic birds. Some moved from natural sites, taking advantage of nesting sites near bountiful landfills, predator and disturbance-free urban rooftops with the added bonus of discarded food on streets and, from the 1970s, plentiful thin bin-bags easily accessible to

gulls and other wildlife."

Mr Jensen, said other popular Kent birds can get in trouble too.

"It's common in spring and summer to find young birds sitting on the ground in the county or hopping about without any sign of their parents," he said.

"This is a situation that is perfectly normal, so there's no need to be worried. These fledglings are doing exactly what nature intended, and left the nest deliberately, a short while before they are able to fly."

Mr Jensen adds: "The young of most familiar garden birds fledge once they are fully feathered, but before they are

able to fly. These fledglings spend a day or two, sometimes longer, on the ground while their flight feathers complete their growth."

His advice can be somewhat tough to understand, as he added: "However tempting is actually is, interfering with a young bird like this will most likely do more harm than good, even if there are predators like



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cats and foxes around.

"Fledglings are extremely unlikely to be abandoned by their parents.

"Just because you cannot see the adult birds does not mean that they are not there. The parents are probably just away collecting food – or are hidden from view nearby keeping a watchful eye, or even been frightened away from their youngster by your

presence. Fledglings should be left where they are, in the care of their own parents.

"Removing a fledgling from the wild has to be a very last resort, and then only if it is injured or has definitely been abandoned or orphaned, as removal reduces its chances of long-term survival to a small fraction."

There are exceptions to this rule,

for instance if the bird is on a busy path or road, or other potentially dangerous, exposed location.

Mr Jensen said: "Given these circumstances, it is sensible to pick it up and move it a short distance to a safer place. Make sure you leave it within hearing distance of where it was found. Birds have a poor sense of smell so handling a young bird does



**NESTING:** Sparrow chick left, and wood pigeons and the great tit, above

not cause its parents to abandon it."

The age of the stranded bird is also important, and Mr Jensen said: "If the young bird is un-feathered or covered in fluffly down and has obviously fallen out of a nest by accident, it may be possible to put it back.

"Only do this if you are sure which nest the chick came from, and if it appears strong and healthy. Sometimes parent birds sense that there is something wrong with one of their chicks, or that it is dying, and they will eject it

out of the nest so they can concentrate on looking after the healthy ones.

"If a healthy chick cannot be returned to its nest, it will be dependent on humans for survival, and should be passed on to an expert rehabilitator as soon as possible."

The organisation said: "If you find an injured bird or a nestling that cannot be returned to its nest, the best you can do is to contact the RSPCA at [rspca.org.uk](http://rspca.org.uk) or by calling us on 0300 1234 999."



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**READY:** Justin Edinburgh, centre, and Adam El Abd (right) are up for the fight as the Gills throw their last dice in a bid for a top six finish

# Leicester miracle inspires Gills towards unlikely play-off push

Gillingham boss Justin Edinburgh hopes to emulate the Foxes' unlikely success, as his side prepare to take on Millwall at Priestfield today to secure a play-off place. **Tom Pyman** reports on the big game

**G**ILLINGHAM take to the field at Priestfield this afternoon in unquestionably the biggest game of their season, and probably the most important for a number of years.

Having led the chasing pack at the top of the League One table for the majority of the season, the Gills have suffered a dramatic slump in form in recent weeks and now sit in eighth – two points off sixth place and the play-offs, which represents their last chance of securing promotion to the Championship – going into the final league game of the season.

To achieve that goal, however, Justin Edinburgh's side, who are remarkably without a win in the league since March 28, will need a minor miracle.

They simply have to win against Millwall this afternoon – no other result will be enough in a game the manager has described to his players as "a cup final".

But in addition to that, they need promotion rivals Barnsley and Scunthorpe – who occupy sixth and seventh in the table – to drop points if Gillingham are to force their way in.

They play away at Wigan and Sheffield United respectively, and given the Gills' significantly better goal difference, a win over the south London

side, and draws in the other two games, will be enough.

Should they secure the results they need, Gillingham will then play a play-off semi-final – home and away – against another member of the top six, with Walsall looking the most likely potential opponents, on Saturday and then again the following Thursday.

The winners of that two-legged affair then take to the hallowed turf at Wembley Stadium in a showpiece final on Sunday, May 29, to determine who secures promotion to the Championship – English football's increasingly-popular second tier.

Speaking at his pre-match press conference earlier this week, Edinburgh said he hopes to take inspiration from Leicester City's incredible feat of winning the Premier League title last weekend, in terms of defying the odds.

He said: "Leicester will inspire every football team around the country and the world because they've shown what can be achieved if you get the right balance, team spirit and belief, and that's what is comes down to.

"Will it be a recurring thing? Who knows. But it certainly gives everyone a bit of optimism, and I believe we deserve to be in those play-offs.

"We still have that glimmer of hope and I believe we'll win our game, and when that happens and the final whistle goes we're reliant on two other teams and that's difficult, but they've got a duty to do and I'm sure they'll do it.

"We know what we need to do, there's no grey area for us, nothing less than a win will be enough for us to get where we want to be."

Millwall themselves have already secured a play-off spot, and have won three on the bounce, but were comprehensively beaten by the Gills in the reverse fixture earlier in the season, courtesy of a Dominic Samuel brace and a Bradley Dack penalty, proving that they're more than capable of getting a result.

But the boss said he expected that to have little bearing on this particular encounter.

While not quite the outrageous 5000/1 offered on Leicester at the start of the season, the bookies clearly don't fancy Gillingham to secure promotion to the Championship, placing them at long odds of 25/1.

However, Edinburgh believes he could hardly have picked better opponents for his rivals going into the final day and was confident his side could sneak back into the top six at the last minute.

"I believe the games the other two opponents have are very tough games," he said.

"Wigan will be looking to secure the title in front of their home fans and gain as many points as they possibly can.

"It's the same with Sheffield United, they'll want to put on a display of their own.

"We know the opponents for the

other two sides but we have to park that to the side, really.

"The only game we can affect, and must affect, is Millwall on Sunday and if we do that I'm sure there'll be some twists along the way.

"There's always a surprise at the end of the season."

A bumper crowd is expected at Priestfield for the 12.30pm kick-off, and Edinburgh believes their 12th man could make all the difference in helping them get over the line.

"They've given everything this season and I know Sunday will be the same – they'll make it a real fortress here.

"We've had three really disappointing home results at the worst possible time but Sunday's a cup final and that's how we'll approach it.

"I'm sure that come the end of the game there'll be some celebrations."

## HOW HAVE THE REST OF KENT'S TEAMS FARED?

THREE of Kent's other teams are in play-off action this weekend, in their own, separate bids of securing promotion.

In the National League South, there were fine results for the county's teams on a sunny Wednesday evening, with both Ebbsfleet United and Maidstone United registering impressive away wins.

Fleet, who sat at the summit of the table for the vast majority of the season before being toppled by Sutton United, were 2-1 victors at Whitehawk courtesy of goals from Stuart Lewis and Danny Kedwell.

Meanwhile in Cornwall, Maidstone ran out comfortable 2-0 winners at Truro City, with Joe Healy and Alex Flisher on the scoresheet for Jay Saunders' men,

who have enjoyed a terrific campaign having only come up from the Southern League last year.

Ebbsfleet and Maidstone's home fixtures at Stonebridge Road and the Gallagher Stadium respectively kick off at 4pm on Sunday.

Dover Athletic's (left) dream of Wembley, and promotion to the holy grail that is the Football League, was hanging by a thread at the time of going to press.

They were beaten 1-0 at home by Forest Green Rovers in the first leg of their National League play-off semi-final on Wednesday night.

A stunning Brett Williams effort in front of the BT Sport cameras proved the only goal of the game and Chris Kinnear's side, who

were due to play their second leg last night, were left with a mountain to climb ahead of their dream to take to the hallowed Wembley turf on May 15.

Elsewhere in the National League, Bromley consolidated their promotion last season with a solid mid-table finish, but Welling United – who progressed further in the FA Cup than any other Kent side – ultimately finished bottom and were relegated.

Despite winning the Kent Senior Cup a fortnight ago, Dartford missed out on a chance of securing promotion from the National League South via the play-offs, while Margate narrowly avoided the drop on the final day last weekend.





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# Is this our ultimate dream team?

As our clubs scrap for glory in the final games of the season, we take a look at the talents who have plied their trade in the county through the years and ask if these would be in your starting line-up?

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

**A**S OUR teams battle it out in the final games of the season this weekend, the nation will be defeaned by the sound of champagne corks still flying out of Leicester after their remarkable Premier League triumph.

With just one of the 92 teams in the Football League hailing from Kent, one could make a case that the scene is not as bright as it perhaps should be for a county of this size.

But scratch beneath the surface and Kent has actually played host to some of the biggest names in British football, including, of course, the man we hope will lead England to Euro 2016 glory this summer.

In no particular order, we've compiled a list of our top ten players to have graced our surfaces over the decades - from Gillingham to Sittingbourne and everywhere in between.

## Roy Hodgson

*Tonbridge Angels (1966-69), Gravesend & Northfleet (1969-71), Maidstone United (1971-72), Ashford Town (1972-73)*



THE England boss enjoyed the majority of his career in the county, featuring for four different teams across an eight year period.

While successful at youth level for Crystal Palace, he struggled to make his name in the first team, and so moved down to non-league, joining Tonbridge Angels as a teenager after England's famous World Cup triumph.

The defender clearly felt destined

for management even at a young age, so he completed training to become a fully qualified coach at just 23.

During his stint at Maidstone United, Hodgson also served as assistant manager to Bob Houghton and also worked as a PE teacher in south London after moving to Ashford Town in 1973.

On his managerial CV he boasts jobs at Inter, Liverpool, Fulham and West Brom, as well as Switzerland and Finland at international level.

## Chris Smalling

*Maidstone United (2007-08)*

MOST likely one of the first name's on Hodgson's teamsheet when England run out against Russia on June 11, Smalling's rise to the top began in far humbler surroundings.

Playing in front of mere hundreds as a teenager at the Gallagher Stadium, Smalling's cultured performanc-

es at Maidstone soon caught the eye of Premier League scouts, and Fulham eventually won the race for his signature in 2008.

Two years later he secured a move to Manchester United, where he is now a regular at the heart of the defence, having won two league titles in his time at Old Trafford, and earmarked by many as a potential future captain for both club and country.

## Jimmy Case

*Sittingbourne (1993)*

A MEMBER of Liverpool's all-conquering side of the 1970s and 80s, Case made five appearances for non-league Sittingbourne in the twilight years of his career.

Famous for having one of the hardest shots in the game, the midfielder scored 23 goals in 186 appearances for the Reds, and won four First Division titles, three European Cups and a UEFA Cup during his time at Anfield.

He also clocked up over a century of games for both Brighton & Hove Albion and Southampton in the 80s.

## Tony Godden

*Ashford Town (1972-78)*

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**STARS:** Chris Smalling, above, playing for Maidstone United and, left, Steve Bruce and Roy Hodgson – all played in the county

BORN in Gillingham, the goalkeeper began his career at Ashford Town, playing for six years before commanding the attention of some of the country's biggest clubs.

West Bromwich Albion signed him in 1978, where he made some 267 appearances between the sticks for the Baggies, before moving to Chelsea and then Birmingham.

Godden also enjoyed loan spells at Luton Town, Walsall, Bury and Peterborough United before a short-lived managerial career after retiring at Kings Lynn.

#### Ron Saunders

*Tonbridge Angels (1955-57), Gillingham (1957-58)*

A LEGENDARY striker during the

1950s and 60s, Saunders moved to Tonbridge Angels after beginning his career at Everton.

He spent two years in the west of the county before moving onto Gillingham where he scored a respectable 20 goals in 49 games.

Saunders then moved to Portsmouth where he truly made his name before moving to Watford and then Charlton Athletic ahead of his retirement in 1967.

He also enjoyed a successful career as a manager for, among others, Norwich City, Manchester City and Aston Villa, where he won the club's first league title in some 71 years in 1981.

#### Steve Bruce

*Gillingham (1979-84)*

THOUGH born in Northumberland,

Bruce actually began his career at Gillingham, after the then Third Division side offered him a trial just as he was about to start work as an apprentice plumber.

Gills boss Gerry Summers had seen him playing for Wallsend in an international youth tournament, and so he travelled down with one Peter Beardsley - who was turned away while Bruce signed.

At the time Bruce was playing as a midfielder, but he was switched to the centre of defence by the head of Gillingham's youth scheme, Bill Collins, whom Bruce cites as the single biggest influence on his career.

He stayed for five years, making over 200 appearances for the club, before joining Norwich City and then Manchester United, where he won three league titles, but notoriously

never won an England cap.

Bruce subsequently enjoyed a respectable managerial career and is currently boss of Hull City in the Championship.

#### Andy Townsend

*Welling (1980-84)*

BORN in Maidstone, and growing up in Bexley, Townsend's roots are unarguably Kentish, despite his decision to play international football for the Republic of Ireland, for whom he won some 70 caps.

The midfielder began his career at Welling United, making over 100 appearances for the Wings, before securing a move to Weymouth in 1985.

It was at Chelsea at the turn of the decade where he really made his name, though, before also racking up over a century of appearances for Aston Villa.

Since retiring he has often appeared as a pundit for ITV, but his contract was not renewed last summer.

#### Steve Finnan

*Welling United (1993-95)*

THOUGH born in Limerick, Ireland, Finnan moved to England at a young age and featured for Wimbledon's academy before being released, when he joined Welling United aged 16.

The full-back played 41 times for the non-league side before Birmingham City snapped him up.

Finnan then went onto play for Notts County and Fulham but his big break came at Liverpool, where he was part of the side that miraculously came from 3-0 down in Istanbul to

win the Champions League in 2005.

Trivia nerds will recognise him as the only player to have played in the World Cup, Champions League, UEFA Cup, Intertoto Cup, all four levels of the English league football and the Football Conference.

#### Barry Fry

*Gravesend & Northfleet (1967-68), Maidstone United (1985-86)*

UNDOUBTEDLY one of the biggest characters in the game, the outspoken Fry enjoyed a brief spell at Gravesend & Northfleet in the 1960s during a playing career that was largely blighted by injury.

It was as a manager that Fry really grabbed the headlines, though, most notably at Peterborough United.

Before that, he was found in the dugout at Maidstone United in the mid-1980s but didn't stay in the county long before switching to Barnet.

#### Neville Southall

*Dover Athletic (2001), Margate (2009)*

THE legendary Welsh goalkeeper is almost synonymous with Everton, for whom he made over 500 appearances, but Southall joined a number of non-league sides in the latter stages of his career, including Dover Athletic in 2001.

He also briefly managed the club but was sacked after only a few months in charge.

Southall was also given the reins at local rivals Margate as caretaker boss in 2009, but again, his stint was short-lived.

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# Movie premiere photos go under the hammer with Beatles shots

**Chris Murphy** looks back at when Sevenoaks hosted the UK debut of a major Julie Andrews musical which would go on to secure seven Academy Award nominations and pull in a number of big names

IT WAS the moment Hollywood came to Kent.

The red carpet was rolled out, the big names invited and for one night only, the Odeon in Sevenoaks became the venue for the UK premiere of a movie which would go on to land a host of Academy Award nominations.

Thoroughly Modern Millie, starring the legendary Julie Andrews – best known for her roles in the likes of the Sound of Music and Mary Poppins – was a musical which got his first airing in the rather modest surroundings of the west Kent town.

And so on March 21, 1968, the great and the good from the British movie industry descended on the town at what is now the Stag Theatre.

Among those walking the red carpet were Diana Dors, Max Bygraves and Shirley Anne Field.

Kent historian and long-time Sevenoaks resident, Bob Ogley, said: "I know it was something The Rank Organisation did back then.

"They used to go out to some of their more provincial cinemas for a premiere. I guess it is to spread their stars around a bit and give everyone the chance to see these actors.

"It is a wonderful thing to do and I don't suppose it happens too often these days, not with the likes of stars of this calibre.

"It used to be run by a chap called Vic Crawley who was a character in the film industry.

"He was always dapper with a bow tie and was respected by Rank."

Crawley had left the Odeon just before the Millie premiere.

The film went on to be nominated for seven Academy Awards and four Golden Globes. Elmer Bernstein collected its only Oscar for best original score.

And scenes from that memorable night are back in the news after an auction company revealed it had an autographed photograph of a number of stars on the night it is selling –



along with one of The Beatles when they famously filmed scenes for their single Strawberry Fields Forever at nearby Knole Park.

The images were captured by the same local photographer, who has now decided to sell them. His identity is being kept a closely guarded secret.

Both went under the hammer this week. The Beatles images sold for £2,900 while the movie premiere shots failed to meet their reserve.

Before the sale, the company said of the Millie shot: "The photograph features Diana Dors, Max Bygraves, who predictably arrived in his white Rolls Royce, Shirley Anne Field, Peter Haig and Jess Conrad who came to Seven-

oaks Odeon Theatre for the premiere. The autographs are all originals appended to the group photograph on the evening of the film."

The other images are from The Beatles filming at the end of January in 1967 and include the autographs of John Lennon, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr. According to the auction house, George Harrison told the cameraman to "p'ss off" when asked for his signature.

Auctioneer Derek Hodge said: "We have had questions from people across the UK and as far as the USA. The photographer is a friend of mine and he decided it was time for others to enjoy these amazing pictures."



**CAPTION:** Premiere signed picture, left, and Beatles images below. Other images show cinema (Odeon pictures courtesy of Stag Theatre, Sevenoaks)



## PLACE IN MOVIE HISTORY

WHAT was once the Odeon in Sevenoaks, has gone through a variety of different guises before it was re-born as what is today The Stag – a hugely popular cinema and theatre.

But even the current manager of the art deco building in London Road, Tony McEwen, was surprised to learn of the time it hosted a movie premiere.

He told us: "I didn't know that happened here and I have been working here for over 20 years.

"It is really fascinating that these stars came along to Sevenoaks for a premiere of a major film."

It was not the first time the cinema hit the headlines. On December 27, 1956, the Royal Command Performance film, Battle of the River Plate – a Second World War movie set in 1939 – was shown there with the audience introduced to some of those involved who appeared on the stage.

And two escapees from notorious Germany prison castle Colditz were reunited in the foyer before the premiere showing of The Colditz Story in 1955.

There was controversy too when the local council, which had a say in

what was screened, banned King Kong and – at first – Rock Around the Clock.

By the time the ban on the rock 'n' roll movie was lifted, most music fans had already seen it in neighbouring towns.

Things were different back then – the cinema even attracted a fair audience to watch their Christmas tree lights being switched on.

Andrew Eyre, the present general manager of The Stag, said: "The building opened in 1935 as a 1,300 seat cinema.

"After the heyday of movies, it started to fade in the 1960s which is maybe why they had the Millie premiere here.

"It had become an Odeon in 1943 and in 1974 we had triplet girls here to open the building as a triplet cinema, which was the trend at the time.

"Over the decades a whole raft of theatre and cinema companies have come and gone, and now after a £3.2m council investment, we are the only theatre, double cinema, and events hall venue I know of."

Today, more than 25,000 visit the venue each month.

## HOW STAG ROSE FROM THE ASHES

THE Stag was originally built as the Majestic Cinema, and opened on August 22, 1936, with the musical farce When Knights Were Bold.

Some 80 years on, the shell of the building looks almost identical. But the 1930s shell hides a dark and twisting story, a tumultuous, ongoing drama which has refused to stick to the script.

Despite the long-term economic downturn which followed the Second World War, the cinema enjoyed a golden era through the 1940s and 1950s. The stage area of today's Stag was, at that point, one of the largest screens in the region. The cinema seated 1,360 in total, with a

large stalls area and a dress circle which is now the theatre auditorium.

In the early 1970s, the cinema was converted into a triple-screen complex, and plans were even hatched to include a discotheque.

But the 1980s brought gloomy times for cinema. The advent of video and the flagging film industry meant that the cinema was increasingly unloved. Planning permission for the disco was refused.

Sevenoaks had for years suffered through the lack of its own theatre. Local thespian Margaret Durdant-Holambay, created the Sevenoaks Theatre Action Group whose acronym has given the Stag its modern name. She

had campaigned for a theatre in Sevenoaks for almost 17 years.

In August 1982, the campaign group received a call from the Rank Organisation, which owned the cinema offering the building for use as a theatre. But the complex did not survive financially and in 1992 the district council acquired the building writing off the debts.

It carried out a £3.2m refurbishment and extension creating the Stag Plaza, a self-contained venue used for drama, music, conferences and more. It was officially reopened in December 1993.

**Source:** [www.stagevenooaks.co.uk](http://www.stagevenooaks.co.uk).



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# From Torchwood to Star Wars, why stars are heading to the sea

Conventions dedicated to the big science fiction franchises on the big and small screen are growing in popularity. And, as **Chris Murphy** reports, Herne Bay is pulling in the big names this summer...

**W**ANT to see the hackles rise on a Star Wars fan? Simply ask them who shot first – Han Solo or Greedo?

The complexities of why a pivotal scene in the original 1977 movie was adjusted as revised editions emerged over the years is really not worth getting into here, suffice to say it has now become one of the most talked about scenes in the saga.

And next month one of the stars of that pivotal moment will be heading to the Kent seaside to take part in a science fiction convention where, despite his face never appearing, he will be one of the most in-demand of guests.

Because Paul Blake was the man behind the mask. He was Greedo and he was shot, or missed, oh who cares, by Harrison Ford's Han Solo.

And now you have the chance to meet him.

He, along with a host of others, will be appearing at Sci-Fi By The Sea, an event in Herne Bay which has grown over the years, and is capitalising on the growing appetite for fans of movies and TV shows to meet their heroes, dress up, and get the chance to look at some of the props used.

In addition to Greedo, there will also be Eve Myles and Kai Owen – stars of the hugely popular Doctor Who spin-off Torchwood, and, just added, is one of the actors from the hugely popular Game of Thrones.

To underline the popularity of the event, organisers are expecting another 8,000 sell-out crowd this year.

Gerald McCarthy is one of the organisers of the event from BayPromoTeam – best known for masterminding the town's popular airshow – which is taking place in the grounds of Herne Bay Junior School on June 19.

He told KoS: "This has become the south east's biggest sci-fi event. This is the fourth one, and last year we sold around 8,000 tickets to people from all over the UK. It does get busy and 8,000 is the capacity for the venue."

"This is a major outdoor sci-fi-style festival featuring celebrities from across the wide world of sci-fi on television and film.

"That is including stars, professional costumers and characters you'd normally have to take a transatlantic flight to meet and greet, and more cool sci-fi props and vehicles than you could shake a light sabre at."

Entry will get you into the show – but if you want a photograph or autograph with the big names, then that will cost extra – normally around £10 each, potentially a little more if they are in costume or with props.

That pales into insignificance when compared with the likes of big names at the official Star Wars Cele-



**VISITING:** Torchwood's Eve Myles, above, will join Peter Blake, who portrayed Greedo in Star Wars, below, and replicas of the likes of Lightning McQueen from hit movie Cars at Sci-Fi By The Sea on June 19 in the grounds of Herne Bay Junior School

bration convention, where guests can routinely pay upwards of £50 for a moment shared with an actor or actress.

Mr McCarthy said: "This event has quickly become very popular in sci-fi circles, breaking the norm of large, sometimes stuffy highly-priced indoor conventions. We like to think our event brings the fun of sci-fi to the masses."

"It's grown year on year so far, and without taking it out of Herne Bay, it will be difficult to grow larger."

"But we're always looking to add attractions and different stars each year, but I think for the value, people just love the variety of what's on offer. Where else can you see Jack Sparrow having a battle with a stormtrooper or a Halo gaming character?"

And there is good news for Game of Thrones fans.

The organiser explained: "Miltos Yerolemos has just been added. Miltos played Syrio Forel, master swordsman and 'dancing teacher' to Arya Stark in HBO's massive hit series."

It is not just the humans stars in attendance that is expected to draw the crowds.

Mr McCarthy added: "Expect to see the ECTO1 vehicle from the Ghostbusters movie, the Back to the Future DeLorean, a Batmobile, and a specially built 16ft scout walker from

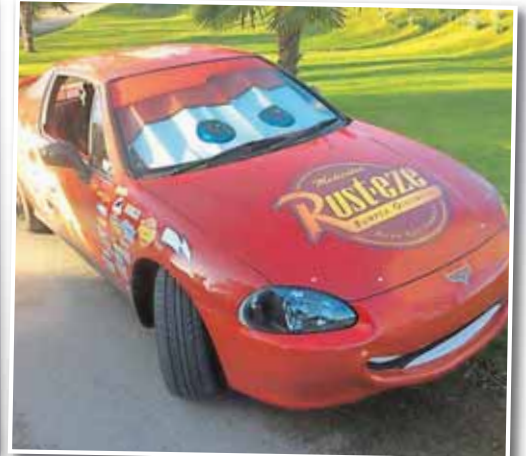


Return of The Jedi.

"Throw in Titan the Robot for good measure, an animatronic T-Rex, a Robot Wars battle arena, a gamer bus with retro games stand, stage with live music, beer and ale tents, food court including Thai, hog roast, and traditional burger stands, and a host of sci-fi related stalls, means pretty much any sci-fi fan is catered for."

Also appearing will be a replica of Lightning McQueen – star of Pixar's hit Cars movies.

He went on: "Many consider this North & West



the best value day out you can have in Kent during 2016.

"Proceeds from the event fund the BayPromoTeam's free seafront airshow, this year which scheduled for Sunday August 14."

The organiser added: "The event sells out well before the event date itself, so anyone interested in coming along really does need to get tickets soon – sales are already up 50 per cent compared with last year."

Also appearing will be Deborah Watling, who was an assistant to

Patrick Troughton's Doctor Who and Katie Manning who was sidekick when Jon Pertwee was the Time Lord.

Ron Hone, who created many of the droids on Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back, will also appear.

Sci-fi by the Sea is being staged on the playing fields of Herne Bay Junior School.

■ Tickets are £7 for adults and £5 for children and a family ticket for two adults and two children is £20 from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/baypromoteam](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/baypromoteam)



# Are you embarrassed by your teeth?

Get your confidence back with no downtime with this new Dental Implant system!

Dr Pieter Claassen of Hanover House, a local dental clinic is experiencing high demand for dental implants due to an advanced technique called PRGF which they offer to patients that are having dental implants.

This new system encourages healing at an accelerated rate which means patients are able to go about their normal, everyday life without any or very little down-time.

Patients travel from all over, demanding this unique treatment which is also being used to help sportsmen and women speed up the healing process following injury. PRGF stands for Plasma Rich Growth Factors, - referred to as accelerated healing by the Hanover House dental implant team.

## The Problem

If you are one of the thousands of people suffering from missing or painful teeth you do not need to be reminded that it is very likely you will experience any or all of the following problems.

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Pieter Claassen - Implant Dentist at Hanover House Dental in Tonbridge

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Dr Claassen says, "Most patients normally have dental implants to stabilise loose and uncomfortable dentures or to replace embarrassing missing teeth. Having fixed teeth again means that they can eat and enjoy the food they want and have the confidence to smile in family photos again."

## PRGF is 100% Natural

The system is the magic solution that helps to speed up the healing process after the procedure, promoting our own unique healing factors to burst into action. Using the revolutionary PRGF system also increases the success rate.

For the first time ever Hanover House Dental Practice are offering the PRGF system completely free of charge when a dental implant is placed. Normally this amazing new treatment would cost £350.00 but for a limited period only Dr Claassen is offering it for FREE!

## Clinical Results

In a study of 1391 dental implant placements using PRGF, the success rate was 99.6%. This shows just how special PRGF is, and as our free introductory gift to you, Dr Claassen wants to provide it free of charge - but not for long. In fact, you only have until Friday 20th May 2016 to take up this offer!

Patients who have osteoporosis often receive medication to strengthen their bones. Unfortunately, in some cases it can lead to the opposite - impaired healing of bone structure. PRGF is excellent for patients potentially at risk

of dental implant failure, shortening the time it takes for the body to accept your implants.

## The Benefits

There are many benefits when a patient chooses to have dental implants and using the PRGF system only increases those benefits...

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## What people say

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**PARODY:** Libby Northedge, Ali Brice and Andrew Doyle will be starring in the production

## Comedy show Graeme of Thrones comes to Dartford

The comedy tells the story of Graeme, a 'super-fan' of the hit HBO TV series...

**F**OLLOWING a critically-acclaimed West End run, Graeme of Thrones will be performed in Dartford during its UK tour.

The comedy show tells the story of Game of Thrones super-fan Graeme, his ex-crush Bryony and his best friend Paul.

Together they attempt to impress a producer and show the world how they think the hit fantasy TV series should have been made.

The show was written by a team of some of the UK's top comedy writers - Toby Park, Andrew Doyle and Dan Evans.

It is directed by Sam Bailey and stars Ali Brice as Graeme, Libby Northedge as Bryony and Mark Davison as Paul.

Mr Brice - a character comedian who has been performing since 2009 and gained critical acclaim

after bringing his character Eric Meat to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival - explained: "Graeme of Thrones is a unique take on Game of Thrones created by three idiots - I'm taking about the characters in the show, not the actors.

"It's a loving homage to the HBO series, but also very silly and very funny," he added.

"My character, Graeme, has his heart set on putting on the best Game of Thrones tribute show there is. The only problem is, he doesn't have any talent.

"But what he lacks in talent he more than makes up for with blind optimism and ruthless hope.

"Basically, Game of Thrones is so well loved and the show comes from such a place of love that it makes Graeme of Thrones a brilliantly silly, funny and fun show."

So what can audiences expect from the performance?

"It's a mix between parody and tribute," said Mr Brice.

"Everyone involved in the show - writers, director, producer, sound, wardrobe - are all huge fans, so it's been created with love for the real Game of Thrones.

"It's such a silly, funny, lovely show. I must've done it nearly 100 times and I'm really looking forward to doing it 100 more.

"It really is different every night and it's fine with such love for the show it's impossible not to love.

"And there's something for everyone, even if you haven't seen the show you're going to be smiling. Plus, I take my top off!"

The show's script consultant, writer John Brittain, added: "Graeme of Thrones is a parody/farce/show-within-a-show/

loving-homage.

"It's nice to be in a room where being an anally retentive fanboy is actually a good thing.

"The writing team had a lovely time geeking out and discussing how ridiculous Ser Jorah and Littlefinger's voices are, how Daenerys really should have double checked there was a no-nudity clause in her contract, and how Jon Snow really is incredibly boring (but so pretty)."

Graeme of Thrones will be performed at the Orchard Theatre on June 4.

The performance will be starting at 8pm and tickets range from £10 to £24.

For more information or to book tickets to the performance you can visit [www.orchardtheatre.co.uk](http://www.orchardtheatre.co.uk) or alternatively call the ticket office on 01322 220000.

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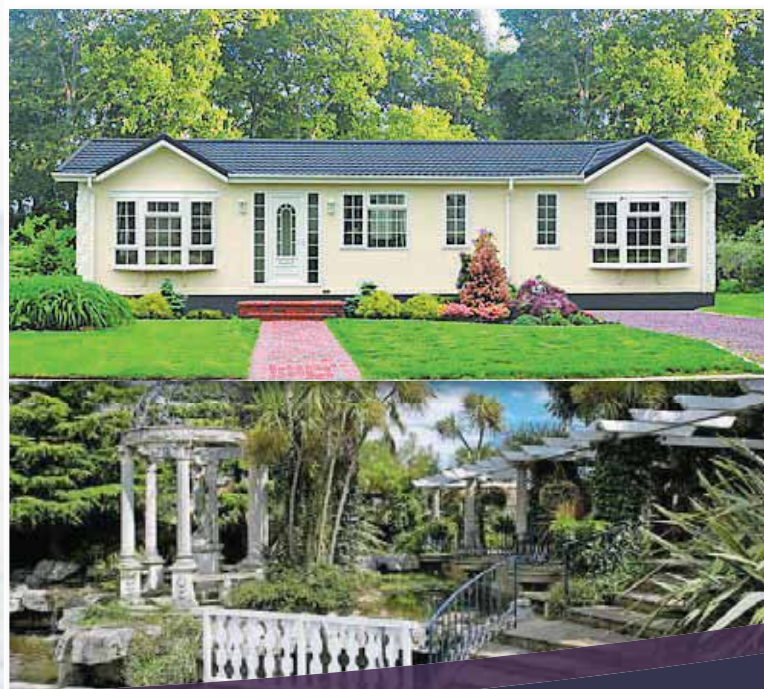
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# Musicians and actors coming to Deal for festival of music

By Molly Kersey-Law

molly.kersey-law@archant.co.uk

**A** VARIETY of artists, musicians and actors will be performing at this year's Deal Festival of Music and Arts.

This year marks the event's 34th anniversary, and it will be running from July 1 to 16, which performances taking place at a variety of different locations.

The festival features classical and contemporary music, jazz, opera, dance, drama, drumming and children's entertainment.

A number of musicians will be performing during the festival's opening weekend.

Cellist Guy Johnston will perform with the European Chamber Orchestra (EUCCO) on July 1.

The orchestra, which originally launched in 1981, will be performing classical and romantic works by composers such as Bach and Mozart.

Pianist Freddy Kempf will give a piano recital featuring the music of Chopin, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky on July 2.

Both performances will be taking place at St George's Church at



**MUSIC:** Freddy Kempf will be performing the music of Chopin and Beethoven. Picture by Neda Navaee

7.30pm. Tickets are £20 for adults or £10 for students.

During the 16-day event The Changeling Theatre will be presenting two outdoor theatre performances.

They will be performing Oliver Goldsmith's comedy of manners *She Stoops to Conquer* at The Pines Calyx, St Margaret's Bay, on July 5 at 7.30pm, and William Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well*

at Walmer Castle on July 13 at 7pm.

The Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers will be performing at St George's Church on July 8 at 7.30pm.

The group has carried out more than 1,000 performances across the UK, Japan and Europe over the last 10 years.

Tickets to all of the concerts are available from the Astor Theatre

Community Theatre.

The box office will be open from May 16.

You can call the theatre on 01304 370220 or alternatively visit [www.theastor.org](http://www.theastor.org).

Booking forms can also be downloaded from the festival's website at [www.dealfestival.co.uk](http://www.dealfestival.co.uk).

A number of brochures for the festival will also be made available in the town.

## Telling unexpected tales

THE Jazz Dance Company will be performing *Unexpected Tales* at the Woodville, Gravesend, on June 24.

The show starts at 7.30pm. Visit [www.woodville.co.uk](http://www.woodville.co.uk) for further details.



## Medway artist will exhibit

MEDWAY-based artist Patrick Butler will be holding an exhibition of his work - named *Secrets!* - at London's Strand Gallery from May 10 to 15.

A private view will be taking place on May 12 from 6pm to 8pm.

Duo Xylaroo will be performing at the event.

## Chance to meet Peppa

PASSENGERS on the Spa Valley Railway can meet Peppa Pig on May 15, on one of the stations from Tunbridge Wells West to Groombridge.

Visit [www.spavalleyrailway.co.uk](http://www.spavalleyrailway.co.uk) for more details.



## Jimmy Jones in Dartford

COMEDIAN Jimmy Jones will be bringing his new stand-up show to Dartford.

Return of the Guvnor will be performed at the Orchard Theatre on May 12.

The show will be starting at 7.30pm.

For more information, or to book tickets, visit [www.orchardtheatre.co.uk](http://www.orchardtheatre.co.uk).



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# Vickery's making food good for gluten-free fans

TV chef Phil Vickery's brand new cookbook is due to be published during Coeliac Awareness Week....

**C**OELIAC disease is not new. But it's only in the last decade that modern-day supermarkets have caught up and started catering to those with the autoimmune illness, which affects around one per cent of the UK population.

A disease – rather than an allergy or intolerance – when people with coeliac eat gluten, their immune system mistakes it as a threat and attacks healthy tissues.

Symptoms include bloating, diarrhoea, nausea, wind, constipation, tiredness, anaemia and sudden or unexpected weight loss, which can be very similar to symptoms caused by an intolerance. However, with coeliac, cutting out gluten completely is

absolutely essential for avoiding, possibly serious, long-term damage and complications.

Coeliac UK notes that up to half a million people are believed to be living with coeliac disease undiagnosed, and it can take up to 13 years for a diagnosis.

It's no wonder the free-from sections are starting to take up more of the supermarket aisles, and brands like PizzaExpress, Young's Fish Fingers and Nestle Cereals are all introducing gluten-free alternatives into their product ranges.

Mintel research reckons the free-from market is worth around £365 million, and predicts it will grow another 50 per cent by 2019.

One man who has watched the



**CHEF:** Phil Vickery has published a new cookbook for coeliacs

free-from rise with interest is TV chef Phil Vickery.

He published his first gluten-free cookbook, *Seriously Good! Gluten-free Cooking* in 2009, which has sold more than 250,000 copies to date, with a revised edition out this year, and his latest, *Phil Vickery's Essential Gluten-free*, is due for publication on Thursday (May 12), during Coeliac Awareness Week.

The *This Morning* regular and his family don't have any need to stick to a gluten-free diet at home.

Instead, Mr Vickery discovered the importance of cooking for people with coeliac and gluten intolerance quite by chance, 15 years ago, when after a shortage of flour for his Christmas puddings to sell at food fayres, he

switched to rice flour, got the Coeliac UK stamp of approval, and they started selling like proverbial hot cakes to his delighted customers.

He's pleased by the increased availability of gluten-free alternatives now ("When I first started, you couldn't buy tapioca flour anywhere") but still doesn't think the need for gluten-free cooking has been embraced universally yet: "Chefs pay lip service to it; I'm astounded at those who think it's a fad."

As an ambassador for Coeliac UK, he knows there's "a very clear distinction between having a disease and choosing [to eat gluten-free] as a lifestyle choice."

"Those waters get muddled in my eyes – coeliac sufferers get very annoyed, it's upset a lot of them."

## New motorcycle event

THE British Motorcycle Federation, Aero Legends and Headcorn Aerodrome are launching a new weekend event – Merlins and Motorbikes.

The event will take place at the Headcorn Aerodrome from June 11 to 12 and it features bands, music, trade stalls and a bike jumble.

Two Spitfires will also be carrying out an aerial display and there will be a drag race. Visit [www.headcornevents.co.uk](http://www.headcornevents.co.uk) to book.

## Sara Pascoe's on stage

COMEDIAN Sara Pascoe will be bringing her new stand-up show to Maidstone next week.

Animal will be performed at the Hazlitt Theatre on Thursday (May 12).

It is suitable for those over the age of 15. The show will be taking place at 8pm and tickets are £13.50.

For more details, you can visit [www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk](http://www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk).

## Tale of girl and giraffe

FAMILY show *The Girl and the Giraffe* will be performed at the Folkestone Quarterhouse later this month.

Presented by Half Moon, it tells the story of a girl who forms a friendship with a giraffe.

The show is suitable for those aged between three and six and it will be taking place on May 28 at 11am.

For further details, or to book tickets, you can visit [www.quarterhouse.co.uk](http://www.quarterhouse.co.uk).

## Adventure with a gran

DAVID Walliams' *Gangsta Granny* will be performed in Bromley in July.

Presented by the Birmingham Stage Company, it tells the story of Ben, who goes to stay with his Granny and discovers that she has a secret.

The show will be running from July 20 to 24. Tickets are £21.50 or £16.50 for those under the age of 16.

Visit [www.churchilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.churchilltheatre.co.uk) for details.

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## Women Seeking

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**GENUINE**, GSH, attractive, outgoing professional female, 55. Enjoys keeping fit, socialising and travel, WLTm similar male for relationship. Text only Mailbox: 5453851

**KATIE** 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks 30s mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3002 Box: 419673

**MATURE** lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTm similar aged gentleman with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421427

**KIM**, 32yrs, attractive blonde lady seeks discreet gent for daytime distractions. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3006 Box: 421657

**FEMALE**, blue eyes, slim and pretty, from South Africa, young fifties, seeking a sincere, retired gentleman, who resides close to the sea. Text only Mailbox: 5456242

**JANE**, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel: No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715

**SINGLE** late 60s female, n/s, GSOH, likes going out and being active, not fun on my own, seeking single male, 66-70, n/s, with GSOH, to share each others interests. Tel: No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421433

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**LUCY** first time advertiser, 32yrs, tall slim blonde airline worker, seeks discreet gent, any status for casual fling. Looks/age unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3026 Box: 420377

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**SOPHIA** young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399

**KAREN**, 42yrs, attractive and broadminded, seeks no strings fun with chap any age, must be discreet. Tel: 0906 515 3038 Box: 407953

**FEMALE**, young 58, 5ft2, size 14, blonde, bubbly, GSOH, warm, loving, kind and caring, loves music, animals, seaside, looking for that special someone. Text only Mailbox: 4715158

**EMILY**, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box: 421375

**GENUINE** single female 49, seeking good natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. Text only to Mailbox: 4196603

**SUSIE**, 42yrs loves life, educated, brunette, own home, works to hard and now wants some fun. If you are a kind gent 30+ then text me for a chat. Box: 4187170

**KIND**, caring lady of African origin, living in UK for past 20 years, looking for a gentleman who is kind and caring, must have a GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421041

**DIANNA**, petite blonde lady, 38yrs, divorced, no kids, wants to spice up her life with new male friends, 35+, might lead to more who knows but no strings. ACA. Box: 4027026

**ANGELA**, 53, African origin, looking for a kind, genuine, caring gentleman, 60 years +. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421039

**SINGLE** slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091

**SLIM** female GSOH, 53, Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. Text only to Mailbox no: 4762600

**KIND** lady, 50s, been broken hearted, seeks kind, genuine man for caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419889

**MARION**, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419657

**CHANTELLE**, 5ft3 light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like nights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883

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**MARIE**, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955

**RACHEL**, late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741

**ESSEX** lady, mid 60s, adaptable, seeking nice male, likes most things. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418537

**AMANDA**, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any age, for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418117

**HELEN**, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243

**FEMALE**, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793

**GORGEOUS** flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

**FEMALE** easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

**PAT**, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc Whistable area, seeks similar slim easy going male 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081

**SUSIE** fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably, older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

**HAPPY** young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

## Men Seeking

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**OUTGOING** male, seeking attractive female, likes sports, music, cinema and nights out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414793

**JOHN**, 42yrs sophisticated businessman wanting a lady by his side to spoil and entertain. Looks unimportant but must have a super personality and kind manner. Box 4086072

**MALE**, 58, very outgoing, looking for attractive female, slim to medium build, for adult fun and maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421883

**SLIM**, 5ft 6 white male WLTm 18 to 42 year old lady for friendship. Text only Mailbox: 5441709

**MALE**, 58, very outgoing, looking for attractive female, slim to medium build, for adult fun and maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421883

**OUTGOING** male, seeking attractive female, likes sports, music, cinema and nights out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414793

**RETIRED**, smart, 68 year old, 5ft5, I enjoy eating out, walking, holidays and golf, WLTm a slim, attractive lady, 60-68, for a loving, tender relationship, to enjoy these times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421853

**HUBERT**, lives in Rochester, single, lonely, looking for someone to get together with and make something happen and enjoy the rest of life with! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420049

**MALE**, 55 looking for mature lady for outings and adult fun, easy going, GSOH, nice looking and a bit shy. Text only Mailbox: 4922399

**YOUNG** 50s male looking for discreet daytime kisses and cuddles with nice female. Kent and Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421601

**FEMININE** sensual female, slim-medium build wanted by slim, kind male for daytime meets, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414809

**JIM** 45, slim 5'8, blue eyes, short brown hair, very fit, would like to meet older lady for regular N S A fun. East Sussex. Text only Mailbox: 4529089

**NEIL**, looking to meet lady for fun, possible LTR with someone special, accom and travel w/Sussex, age/looks unimportant. Text only Mailbox: 4435323

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**CHRIS** widower, likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191

**MALE**, 6ft, slim, 67, divorced, retired, likes social drinks, meals out, nights in and all, WLTm lady with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421351

**MALE** 50, GSOH, looking for soul mate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387485

**KATIE**, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127

**BLONDE** female, 5ft 11ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

**JAN** 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

**ATTRACTIVE** lady early 50s, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTm professional, caring gent, 50-60's for attention and future together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416569

**RACHEL** attractive, blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403

**MALE**, 50, 6ft 4ins, well built, divorced gent, looking to date calm and kind lovely lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421955

**BARRY**, 50, 6ft, well-built, seeks lovely lady for good times, loving and enjoying life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421047

**DAVE** 64 solvent, working, not bad looking, would like to meet slim, fun to be with female, 50 to 60, to get to know. Chelmsford area. Text only to Mailbox: 4368820

**MALE** 38, good-looking, GSOH, seeks lady, 35-55 for laughter and lots of fun. Kent/Sussex. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 369301

**CALM**, kind and good company, male seeking a lovely lady for good times and fun and loving. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419733

**MATTHEW**, five foot eleven, looking for a mature lady for discreet friendship and a few laughs. Dartford area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419469

**PROFESSIONAL** gentleman, just retired, own house, likes holidays, reading, cinema, WLTm similar professional lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420767

**MALE**, 60, medium build, gosh, seeks attractive female, under 50, for no strings, discreet, daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420621

**CLINT**, 37, kind, caring, honest and WLTm someone of any age who is similar and looking for a relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419951

**HEALTHY** 61yr old male, N/S, medium build, likes France, cooking, gardening, seeks female, 50-60 for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 286360

**ATTRACTIVE** white gent, 48, 56ft, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady, 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025



**BROWN** eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377

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**NEVILLE** 5ft 6ins, Caribbean, likes wine, nights in, seeks female to spend the rest of his life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333911

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**YOUNG** 60yr old male, knows how to treat a lady, seeking special lady to spoil for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417909

**MICK** 50, seeks attractive female for nice times out, genuine calls only. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417691

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**PETER**, bi male, aged 68, inexperienced seeks bi male for fun and friendship. Text only Mailbox: 5459879

**MALE** medium build, likes outdoors, DIY, seeking slim, N/S guy for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403267

**MATURE** bi male seeks similar for fun and friendship. Text only Mailbox: 4641909

**EASYGOING** guy, 62, likes outdoors, countryside, walks, seeks slim, N/S quiet guy for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 333477

**GAY** male, 68, likes walks, books, seeks N/S guy for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411413

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Holywell Park is a large country house built approximately 300 years ago and is set in its own grounds situated in the Hamlet of Hodsoll Street. Family run since 1986, our aim is to provide a friendly, caring environment for the elderly. The beautiful house is surrounded by lovely gardens. There is even a quaint country put outside our gates!

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

## PM on EU? Off with his head!

DAVID Cameron and the government should not have got involved in the EU referendum; he should have presented solid honest information as fact not fiction and stayed neutral and let us all decide for ourselves.

David Cameron and his government have targeted our universities and students not because of their superior intellect but because they are young naive and gullible.

They have also recruited the universities to do their bidding for them; the universities are telling the students to vote to stay in, not because it is better for the country and the students' future, but because universities think they could lose their EU grants paid via the UK tax payer if we leave.

Because of David Cameron's government's negative campaign they have split the people of our great country and the Conservative Party in half with 'project fear'. The last person to do so much damage to the UK was Charles I during the Civil War of 1642.

It is the prime minister's job to lead, govern and bring people together, not to actively split them apart with his win-at-any-cost campaign.

With all the damage he has caused he would not be able to bring the people of the UK and the Conservatives back together after the EU referendum, win or lose. He should resign. If not, as with Charles I, off with his head!

**R Webb,**  
via email

## Not a big fan of last week's letter

FOR starters, let's kill the myth we are a prosperous nation [Paul Smith, KoS Letters, last week].

We are £1,600,000,000,000 in debt, that's £50,800 for every working person and the interest is more than the defence budget.

There are also many billions in PFI loans taken out to pay for building hospitals and so on. Much of Britain and British business is either fully or partly foreign owned, over which we have little control.

As for peace in Europe, tell that to the Greeks struggling and continually being bailed out because the euro was forced on them. Tell that to the Swedes who are overrun by violent gangs with 123 immigrants under 18 for every 100 Swedes. Tell that to the lady in

## LETTER OF THE WEEK



## Peace in our time is not thanks to EU

YOUR correspondent Paul Smith's belief that the EU has been the cause of peace in Europe is not borne out by the facts [KoS, letters, last week].

The forerunner to the EU, the European Coal and Steel Community, was established by the Treaty of Paris in 1951 while the Treaty of Rome, which formalised the whole European project was not signed until March 1957, and then only by six countries. Does Mr Smith really believe that Joe Stalin, who was in power until his death in 1953, was dissuaded from attacking Western Europe by these embryonic organisations? The fact that the Berlin Air Lift began in June 1948 clearly gives the lie to any such assertion.

Unfortunately for Mr Smith the answer to European peace is literally as simple as ABC. It was the American, British and Canadian forces of Nato which deterred the Warsaw Pact from

attempting military action as West Germany did not join Nato until 1955 and France withdrew in 1966 and did not rejoin until 2009. It is the continuing existence of Nato which ensures that even a revived Russia will not risk launching any sort of major military action against us.

The reality is those who say that the existence of the EU has preserved peace in Europe really mean is that it has restrained Germany, a nation which, in the less than 150 years of its existence, has lashed out at its neighbours a number of times and has launched two devastating world wars.

Far from bringing peace it was meddling by the EU which helped provoke the Balkan Wars at the end of the twentieth century and it was similar interference in the Black Sea which caused Russia to react as she has done.

**Colin Bullen**  
Tonbridge

It's Nato that has kept the military peace for so long.

**Phil Granger,**  
West Malling

## Ponder benefits of EU at big vote

IN A matter of weeks, people living in the south east will go to the polls to decide if they want to remain in the European Union.

The EU referendum debate must include a thorough discussion about tackling corporate power.

The 'leave' campaign has offered no solutions to how an isolated UK would succeed in ensuring multinational corporations do not abuse their position - when it comes to tax dodging, working conditions or environmental safeguards.

With large businesses operating freely across borders, we need EU-wide rules more than ever, to protect the public interest. From capping bankers' bonuses to introducing a 'Robin Hood Tax' on speculative financial transactions, the EU is often ahead of the UK government on holding corporations to account.

In response to the tax dodging scandal exposed by the Panama Papers, the European Parliament launched a full investigation into the content of these leaked documents.

My colleague Molly Scott Cato, the Green MEP for the South West, has received the support of over half a million citizens on her petition urging EU institutions to prosecute banks that allow their clients to hide assets in tax havens.

In the UK as in other EU countries, people are rising up against the controversial US-EU trade deal (TTIP), which threatens to put corporate profit above public services, environmental protection, and workers' rights.

Opposition to TTIP in the European Parliament is growing. It's already meant major delays, more transparency, and significant concessions. Now is the time to stand in solidarity with anti-TTIP campaigners across Europe to win this fight.

Whilst bolder measures are required to properly protect the public interest in the face of powerful multinational corporations, we have seen that EU-level action is crucial.

**Keith Taylor,**  
Green MEP

## Ramsgate Bob & Phil's appeal

MY father used to sing at Bob and Phil's in Ramsgate - now known as the Refectory - on occasions during the 1950s and I would like to track down some pictures and history of the place which apparently was quite a big deal.

I had some pictures of my father singing there and unfortunately cannot locate them and hoping something will be online since social media has taken over.

If anyone recalls this place and remembers a guy called Frank (Frankie) Boyd, please get in touch at the following email address rob\_boyd@rocketmail.com. Thank you.

**Robert Boyd,**  
via email

## KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

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- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to

people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

**We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.**





## Margate by Graham Read, Rochester

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**TOP OCTAVIA:**  
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the Skoda  
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supermini

## Skoda springs seasonal offers

**BRAND UPDATE:** Czech brand now has a truly well-rounded line-up of cars that contradict the jokes during its Soviet era production...

**S**KODA is on a springtime sales drive with low rate finance or PCP (personal contract plan) offers on desirable cars that already feature regularly in 'Top 10 cars to buy' surveys.

A particular favourite is the Octavia: well-priced anyway, it delivers much within a relatively compact frame, whether the versatile hatchback or roomy estate.

There is an impressive vRS sporting option too, plus the availability of 4x4 or, for the rural set, vets, surveyors and the like, the Scout estate version with 4x4, raised ride height and extra bodywork protection.

If you really must take the challenging route though, the formidable Yeti Outdoor SUV is available in full 4x4 and 'protected state' while the standard front-wheel drive car is spacious, practical and economical enough to battle rivals in the crossover sector.

There is little weakness in the remaining line-up from this VW group owned Czech brand, which has gone from Soviet era laughing stock, to become one of the most effective and fast growing car brands around.

Witness its small car contenders: the brilliant Citigo three and five-door city car – on balance, the best in its class – and the Fabia supermini.



**SIMPLY  
SUPERB:**  
Skoda's  
flagship

The latter sells as a hatchback or surprisingly capacious estate and is far more stylish than its predecessor which, like so many superminis, tried too hard to emulate the mini-MPV approach of Honda's Jazz.

But the last word rightly goes to the aptly named Superb, Skoda's flagship. Perhaps

previously burdened by expectations arising from such a label, the Superb – saloon or estate – now is superb. It looks and feels much like an Audi A6 for a lot less money. It might not have such a sporty chassis, but buyers who desire comfort and class may prefer the Skoda – and the money left over for serious luxury weekends away.



# Suzuki's celestial body offers space aplenty

Celerio's name won't leave you starry-eyed, but admire the hard facts: compactness with masses of space for the money, writes **Steve Loader**.

**S**UZUKI'S most junior model has a silly name, meaning 'celestial river'. And there's nothing heavenly about the Celerio's looks either, which follow the usual city car practice of wrapping the most compact shape possible around up to five human beings.

So it's tall in profile and rather severe looking, thus easily outshone in showroom appeal by the funky Peugeot 108 and its sisters or the stylish VW Up and its own clones.

But there is something heavenly about how the Celerio's passenger space is delivered; it's huge, allowing the Japanese marque to axe both the Alto city car and Splash supermini MPV when it launched the Celerio last year.

Three can be accommodated across the back at a push, and the two 'outsiders' can be six footers – not normally possible at city car level.

With a five-door body offering excellent access, the Celerio (from £6,999) also trounces all other city car contenders by offering 254 litres of boot space. Even the Ford Fiesta from the class above supplies just 36 litres more, while folding the Celerio's 60/40 split rear seats



creates a near flat load space of 726 litres as well.

Admittedly, the cabin isn't the liveliest place to be and some of its more cramped rivals could still woo a buyer through style, but everything is well organised and constructed. You don't get the impression anything is going to fail or fall

off and that's a trait shared with Suzuki's brilliant Swift – pound for pound, possibly the best supermini you can buy.

Does the Celerio echo the Swift there too? Well, it's not the cheapest small car, but it is arguably the best value, since it comes with virtually all the equipment you need – six



airbags, air con, digital radio, Bluetooth and alloys are all standard.

And running costs are minimal: CO2 emissions on the 68bhp 1.0-litre petrol powertrain are low enough to escape road tax altogether and the official combined cycle consumption figure is at least 65.7mpg, or in the

## Suzuki Celerio 1.0 SZ3 Dualjet

Price:	from £8,499
Driving appeal:	★★★
Image:	★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
Best rival:	Skoda Citigo

case of the ultra-eco Dualjet model tested here, 78.4mpg, though it will cost you an extra £500 compared with a similarly specc'd equivalent with the standard set-up.

Needless to say, performance isn't a priority and the Celerio makes stately progress to 62mph in 14 seconds, a pace that harmonises with its galleon-like reaction to being pitched into corners at speed, not that the vague steering will entice you into much of that.

That said, grip is good, the precise five-speed gearshift falls nicely to hand and the Celerio's weight-saving design allows quick take-offs, more than enough for town centre cut and thrust, even if the three-cylinder engine isn't that refined when cruising the motorway.

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Isle of Wight - Friday, 6 Jan, 2017 - Quote: NY1-2-KOS

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### Spring Back to the 60s Party

Pontins Pakefield, Suffolk Coast  
Friday, 10 March, 2017 - Quote: PP3-KOS

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# commercial vehicles

## A buyer's guide

**PICK-UP STAR:** the VW Amarok



## Record van numbers now on UK roads

By Steve Loader

**V**AN numbers on UK roads have hit an all-time high of more than four million according to the motor industry's Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT).

This marks a 4.3 per cent increase on this time last year, and underlines sustained business confidence according to the SMMT, which also calculated that the commercial vehicle industry – including trucks, buses, coaches, and pick-ups but largely made up of vans – is worth £11 billion annually to the UK economy.

The increasing uptake of new vans is good news for the environment too, with all vans registered from September this year needing to meet strict Euro-6 emissions regulations.

These vehicles feature advanced filters which capture 99% of soot particulates, as well as exhaust after-treatments to dramatically cut emissions of nitrogen oxides.

The group also notes the increasing take-up of electric vans, which are particularly effective for operators in urban areas where

operations may involve lots of stops and starts through both traffic and deliveries. They can also be good for a company's image.

The van sector's buoyancy is a far cry from the dark days after the recession hit in 2007, when registrations for vans – oiling the wheels of British business, construction and manufacturing – plunged as operators sought desperately for economies, retaining and punishing vehicles by clocking up more miles than they would normally.

■ Read on for tips on how to choose your next workhorse.



**TWO FROM RENAULT:** the capacious Kangoo and its big brother panel van, the Trafic



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Fuel consumption figures for NP300 Navara Range: URBAN 32.5-40.3mpg (8.7-7.0L/100km), EXTRA URBAN 46.3-47.9mpg (6.1-5.9L/100km), COMBINED 40.3-44.9mpg (7.0-6.3L/100km), CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 183-167g/km.

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# All-new Navara picks up standards

Pick-up trucks are getting civilized as users demand car-like comfort, so Nissan aims to deliver with its latest Navara, writes **Steve Loader...**

**L**IKE the rough-tough vehicles that they are, the production lives of pick-up trucks used to go on and on, but that's all changing. Pick-up buyers now expect more and more comforts from these big boys' toys.

Many of those buyers are also business people and professionals exploiting a tax loophole allowing them a four-door, five-seat, 4x4 pick-up with a bespoke cover over the flatbed area for far less cash than they would splash on a big SUV or off-roader.

So the all-new Nissan Navara (from £18,381 ex VAT) is unlikely to soldier on for as many years as its predecessor, which shook the pick-up market itself when it arrived in 2005.

Its replacement is another breath of fresh air: despite its similar bulk, it feels far handier to drive once you get used to the massive bonnet ahead of you and I was surprised to find that the test car's seven-speed auto was holding me back at times even when using the selectable change option – would-be buyers might want to check out the six-speed manual versions.

Power comes from a robust Renault-inspired 2.3-litre turbodie-



sel that is standard on the line-up, but offered with 160 or 190PS (158 or 188bhp). I drove a 190 in 4x4 format, which had plenty of power on tap so I can't imagine that the 160 will be a slug.

As such vehicles go, the Navara is also a handsome beast: the rather

more slab-sided look of before has made way for a distinct shape to the cab section, with the cargo 'box' tacked on – as is the style of the sector these days.

Being kitted out in flagship Tekna trim also added to the car's road presence by bringing big smart



18-inch alloys – including a matching spare – lots of chrome add-ons, leather seats and highlights inside, powered adjustment on the driver's seat, rear parking sensor and camera, and much more.

The dashboard and stowage arrangement is first class – up to car

## Nissan Navara Tekna Dble Cab

Price:	from £30,796 (incl VAT)
Driving appeal:	★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★
How green?:	★★★
Best rival:	Ford Ranger

standard – and refinement is surprisingly good.

A car driver might carp at occasional clunks from the suspension, but ride quality is far superior to the old car; though that was a paragon of refinement for the sector when it came out.

And it is unfair to judge the Navara in that way anyway, as this is still intended to be a workhorse – despite what some fair weather Marlboro Men buyers might intend – coming into its own when faced with rough terrain, a building site or some heavy duty towing – up to 3,500 kilos and a 750 kilo-unbraked trailer weight.

Those opting for the 4x4 version will find selectable high and low ratio 4x4 modes, though the car runs in rear-wheel drive for on-road economy.

# Van Buying Tips

**Size it up** – gauging van space and weight needs is crucial for small or start-up businesses, so opt for one that can grow with your needs. Conversely, a bigger and under-used van could cripple a fledgling business with higher leasing and operating costs.

**Access** – do you need one or two sliding doors, and will you have to unload in cramped spaces, meaning that twin rear doors will be better than a tailgate?

**Powertrain** – you'll probably want a diesel, though electric might be good for your firm's image and operating costs if you cover few miles. Opt for an automatic gearbox too for urban or stop-start work. But if you cram your van and use all of its weight capacity, consider a bigger engine.

**Do your research** – don't buy a brand just because you like its cars; the van business is different. And check which models win awards: van media tend to be hard-nosed about operating costs, convenience and other aspects – awards will be well earned.

**Take a test drive** – you or a staff member will spend lots of time in the van, so it must work well for the regular driver and be easy to handle and park.

**Does it look good?** – are appearances important to the company image or, the bottom line, what will the neighbours or 'er indoors think when it's parked outside your house?

**New or used?** – a new van is better for your business image, and there is the promise of greater reliability and no need for an MOT for three years, but it costs more to acquire. A good compromise is to buy a smart used van with warranty from a main dealer though.



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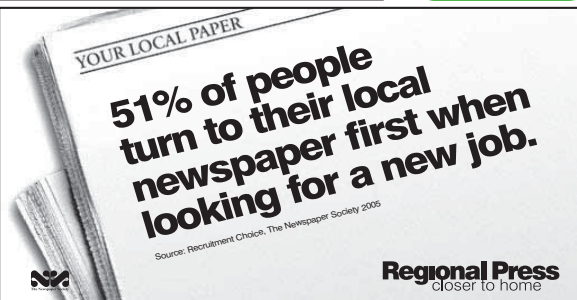
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# Morris boost for Gills in 'cup final'

Gillingham's play-off dream rests on today's Millwall clash

## Football

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

GILLINGHAM boss Justin Edinburgh was in bullish mood ahead of his side's must-win League One clash with Millwall this afternoon.

Despite the Gills also needing favours from Wigan and Sheffield United, and a terrible run of recent form, Edinburgh was full of confidence in his pre-match press conference.

Having fallen to a heartbreaking late defeat to Burton last weekend, the atmosphere could understandably have been somewhat flat, but the manager insists the vibe is quite the opposite.

"Obviously there's a huge amount of hope because quite clearly we can gain the final place in the play-offs.

"Of course we look at where we could have done better but it's also important to take the positives and move onto the next game.

"We're always confident, we always believe in ourselves and believe we can win on Sunday.

"We can take confidence in what has gone on previously [Gills were 3-0 winners in the reverse fixture] but I don't think it has any bearing on the match on Sunday – it's a cup final for us."

The Gills have been ravaged by injuries in recent weeks and things looked to have taken another turn for the worse when Welsh midfielder Aaron Morris had to be taken off last weekend, but Edinburgh says he has made a speedy recovery and could be in contention for today's titanic match.



**FOCUS:** Gillingham boss Justin Edinburgh

Pictures: ADY KERRY

"Aaron had a scan and came back with no major injury so that's a big plus for us because he was concerned he re-injured his knee," he said.

"So now we've got to see if the swelling can disperse – he's touch and go for Sunday.

"Doug Loft has come back and

made a big impact too, so I think we're in good shape."

The return of top scorer Bradley Dack, who recently scooped a number of gongs at the club's awards ceremony, as well as the official League One Player of the Year title, will only add to Edinburgh's firepower.

## Latham hails Bell-Drummond partnership

## Cricket

NEW Zealand Test opener Tom Latham proved an instant hit in Canterbury as he and his new opening partner Daniel Bell-Drummond helped ease Kent to a 10-wicket win over Glamorgan in the county championship this week.

Bell-Drummond finished on 86 not-out after hitting 84 in the first innings, while Latham hit 53 and was then unbeaten on 79 at the end.

They are Kent's first opening partners to post century first-wicket stands in each innings of a championship match since Arthur Pheby and Arthur Fagg recorded 107 and 132 against Gloucestershire in 1954.

It is only the third instance in championship history that Kent have



**STAR:** Tom Latham

posted two separate hundred first-wicket stands.

Latham, 24, who only landed in

England in Tuesday via a long-haul flight from Los Angeles, became the first Kent player to pass 50 in both innings of his debut match.

The diminutive left-hander said:

"It is nice to come away with a 10-wicket win but I think the way we started with the ball on day one set the tone for the whole match.

"We stuck at our guns pretty well in the field too.

"It's clear already that Danny and I compliment each other nicely.

"We set ourselves small targets, five runs here, five runs there and by the end the runs were flowing.

"Hopefully we can continue on like this for the rest of the season."

Bell-Drummond added: "Tom's obviously a class player and it was an honour to open the batting with him."

## Sport Shorts

» Email [sports@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:sports@kosmedia.co.uk)  
or call Tom Pyman on 01233653477

## Snodland welterweight extends unbeaten run

SNODLAND boxer George Hennon extended his unbeaten record to three with an impressive win over Danny Donchev on Friday at York Hall.

The 21-year-old welterweight defeated the Bulgarian Danny Donchev 40-36 on points at a venue where the likes of Lennox Lewis, Joe Calzaghe, Ricky Hatton and Carl Froch have all performed in professional bouts.

Hennon started the four three-minute round contest brightly, using the jab well, throwing plenty of punches and setting a high work rate and was only hit on a couple of occasions as he coasted to victory.

'Hen' now plans to fight again on a Carl Greaves Promotions show in Essex on July 1, and said afterwards: "So many things to work on but that's going to come with experience under those lights.

"I do it in the gym everyday but it's just doing it on the big stage.

"Taking a week off out of the gym then back in again for July 1."



**VICTOR:** George Hennon



**WINNERS:** Colin Jelf in action

## Powerboating father and son off to a flier

KENT-BASED father and son powerboating duo, Colin and Ben Jelf, got off to a flying start this week by taking the lead in two of the five championship classes.

Ben, 15, took a break from his GCSEs to claim the opening Grand Prix victory in the GT30 class, while his father, a three-time world F2 champion, was also victorious in his favoured class.

Colin Jelf said afterwards: "Once again it's been a busy weekend for the team."

"We all put a lot of hard work into getting the results we do and it's great to get the first Grand Prix win of the season under your belt.

"However, it's a long season and in powerboat racing anything can happen so we won't be resting on our laurels."

## Bull shuffles pack as six depart

SOME six players departed Margate this week as manager Nikki Bull shuffles his pack.

Jamie Stuart, Danny Green, Kane Wills and Chris Lewington have all left the club after the culmination of the National League South season last weekend, in which the Gate narrowly avoided relegation.

They were joined through the exit door by defender Jake Goodman, who

wanted full-time football and striker Christian Jolley who wanted to leave for 'geographical reasons'.

Bull said: "I would like to wish the boys all the best and thank them for all their hard work during their time at Margate, but now it is about looking ahead and rebuilding a different team under the new financial climate that the club will be operating in."

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